

HISTORY

Aryan Wars

Vedas to War on Terror

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Contents

ARYANS WARS 1947 - 2012	10
Historical Setting	10
Vedas	29
Hinduism or Brahminism	31
Jainism & Buddhism	33
Alexander the Great	34
Darius & Skylax	36
Social life of India	41
Ashoka.....	42
Sakas, Khushans & White Huns	44
Judaism.....	47
Muhammad{pbuh 571-632 AD}.....	48
The rise of Islamic world	50
Indus Valley	53
Conquest of Central Asia	53
Image Breakers ‘ Bhut Shikan’	53
Mamluks 1206 – 1290 A.D.....	55
Afghanistan	55
Sikhism 1799 - 1846	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Waziristan.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Topography & Culture	Error! Bookmark not defined.
British East India Company	68
Great Game & Forward Policy	69
First Anglo Afghan war. {1839.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Annexation of Punjab 1849.....	69
Punjab Irregular Frontier Force {Piffer}	81
First Afghan –Anglo Treaty 1855.	82
After 1857	82
Durand Line	88
First Kashmir War.....	Error! Bookmark not defined.
Kashmir-British legacy.	Error! Bookmark not defined.
MacDonald-Macartney Line 1898-99,.....	87

McMahan Line	87
Defence White Paper 1946.....	96
Transfer of Power 1947	97
Indian Act Of Independence 1947	98
First Kashmir War.....	98
Kashmir did not acceded.....	100
Operation Curzon	102
Kashmir War.....	103
Instrument of Accession	104
Tochi Scouts	105
Chakoti & Subedar Hamid Gul	106
Fundamental of Pakistan's military strategy	107
Operation Datta Khel.....	108
Baltistan	109
Peace proposals 1948.....	110
Security Council Resolution 47	111
13 August 1948.....	114
Karachi Agreement, Azad Kashmir.....	116
5 th January 1949.....	118
THE 1965.....	120
RANN OF KUTCH	121
The Story of Dwarka Reconnaissance - 1964	121
Performance in the "Rann"	127
OPERATION ABLAZE -MAY-1965	128
OPERATION GIBRALTAR,.....	129
OPERATION GRAND SLAM.....	131
1 St September 1965 a Historical Day	132
Colonel Babar Bags 55 Sikhs	134
2ND SEPTEMBER 1965- Major General Yahya Takes Over the Command	137
3rd September 1965.....	137
4th September 1965-.....	139
17 DAYS OF SEPTEMBER 1965	140
Birds Eye View of the War	143

Lahore-Kasur Sector	144
SIALKOT SECTOR	149
12 th September 1965-OH-13 Shot Down-.....	153
14 th September,.....	161
18 th September -	163
Enemy Para troopers	165
Last Day of the War	166
Sadhewala Post- December 1965.....	168
Tashkent Declaration.....	170
PAKISTAN India war 1971.....	172
Captain Ikram Sehgal.....	175
EASTERN FRONT.....	183
Indian Forces in the East	185
WAR IN THE WEST	198
Northern Sector	202
Central Sector {Sialkot-Kasur}	202
Southern Sector {Rahim Yar Khan-Chhor}	207
The Chhor Sector	209
Last Day of War	210
Major Qasim - 4th January 1972.....	211
Kayian, May 1972	213
Chak Mukam – 1972	214
Simla Agreement.....	214
Siachen Glacier	217
Pakistan's Response -1981.....	219
Enters Army Aviation	219
Indians Detection 16 th August-1983.....	221
Race for the Passes- 1984.....	222
Indians Also Reach Saddle.....	224
Quaid Observation Post- June 1987	228
OPERATION QIADAT	230
CHUMIK OPERATION-April 1989	233
CHULLUNG OPERATION July 1992.....	239

REMEMBERING SIACHEN	241
Diary of an officer	247
30 th January 1988	247
31 st January 1988	248
1 st February 1988	248
2 nd February 1988	249
3 rd February 1988	249
4 February 1988	249
6 th February 1988	249
7/8 th February 1988	250
9 th February 1988	250
10 th February 1988	251
11 th February 1988	251
12 th February 1988	251
13 th February 1988	251
15 th February 1988	252
14 th February 1988	252
17 th February 1988	252
18 th February 1988	252
19 th February 1988	253
23 th February 1988	253
Wednesday 24 th February 1988	254
Friday 25 th February 1988	254
Thursday 25 th February 1988	254
6 th March 1988	255
07 th March 1988	255
08 March 1988	255
5 th March 1988	256
4 th March 1988, Friday	256
3 rd March 1988	256
2 nd March 1988	256
1 st March 1988	257
28 th Februaray 1988	257

9 th March 1988.....	257
10 th March 1988.....	257
11 th March 1988.....	258
12 th March 1988.....	258
13 th March ‘Miracle’	258
14 th March 1988.....	259
16 th March 1988.....	259
In The Line OF Duty.....	259
Kargil	267
Violent Kashmir 1989-2004	267
Shifting of Guns to Shaqma	269
Peace talks	270
21 february 1999. Lahore Declaration.....	270
Operation Koh Paima	271
The Aviation Hero Of Kargil	274
Afghan War 1978– 1989.....	276
Forward Thrust.....	277
Saidgi.....	278
Kaitu Valley	279
Niaz Ali Khan.....	279
Mujhadeen,.....	279
AN - 26.....	280
Hind MI- 24.....	280
Another Pair lands at Chitral.....	281
Fighting Falcon Search.....	281
Inaccessible Areas	283
Operation Al Mizan 10 th August 2002.....	285
Taliban	286
Rise of Taliban	288
Enduring Freedom.....	290
Thunder Storm.....	299
Operation Kalosha.....	300
Operation Hifazat	302

North Waziristan Agency.....	304
OPERATION LABBAIK	309
Operation Blue Lagoon January – February 2002.....	313
Operations of Tochi Scouts.....	314
No. 2 Wing Bangidar 19 – 22 January 2002.....	316
No.4 Wing - Tochi Pass, 19th January – 6th February 2002	317
Dwa Toi.....	317
No.1 Wing - KAZHA VALLEY 12 – 14February 2002.....	320
Not so Trivial Affairs	321
Madrasah& Ulemas	322
Saidgi Operations- January 2005	323
Dewgar Operation	324
MirAli- 26 March 2005.....	325
April 2005	325
21st April 2005	326
Search for Haji Yaqub – 2nd June 2005 (Khushali Tori Khel)	326
Haqqani Madrassa Search 11th June 2005	326
Diffusing a Bomb 14th June 2005	327
First heliborne operation in NWA.....	327
Haqqani Searched Again 11th September 2005	327
Khatti Killi Operation 29th September – 2nd OCTOBER, 2005	328
Operation Datta Khel 1-3 October 2005	334
Zara Mela	336
Isha Check Post	336
Chashmai Bridge 10th October 2005	337
Eid Ul Fitr.....	338
Gangs Banged- MiranShah.....	338
In Taliban’s captivity	340
Saidgai Search & Cordon Operation 5th January 2006	341
Conduct of Operation	342
Establishing Cordon	342
Conclusion	343
Hassu Khel.....	343

Natasi Check Post.....	343
Hassu Khel Check Post.....	344
6/7 January 2006.....	344
US Raid on Saidgai 6/7 January 2006.....	348
Improvised Explosive Device {IED} 30 th January 2006	348
Ides of March 2006	349
Gosh & Thall Piquet.....	350
Tut Narai Post 24 th March 2006.....	350
British Cemetery Last Guard, 23 rd April 2006.....	353
Suicide Attacks, May - June 2006.....	354
Banda Post - June 2006, a Case of Extreme Casualness.....	355
Peace Talks	357
5 th September 2006, Pact Signed.....	359
2007 a Bloody Year.....	359
20 th July 2007 Boya.....	361
Fire Raids & Rocket Attacks-2007.....	362
IED.....	362
Red October.....	364
Water Ambush.....	365
Political Front	368
2008 - Life after the Peace Agreement	370
Protection Walls-2008	372
Vehicle Checking	372
Agency Headquarters Operation 22 January 2008.....	372
Election Day 18 th February 2008.....	373
24 th February 2008 Attack on Stadium Check Post.....	373
Amin II Post Closed	374
Operation Rah-e-Najaat 24 th October 2009.....	374
End of Decade	374
2010 - Machis Village	375
February 2010.....	375
Rule of Engagements.....	376
4 th July 2010	376

No.1 Wing Tochi Scouts.	376
Mamuzai Valley	378
Cheelosar Feature	380
Sammo Killi.....	382
No.2 Wing Tochi Scouts. 2009 - 2012.....	385
Hangu. August – April 2009	386
Buner. April – August 2009	388
Kalpanrai	389
No.2 Wing & Fakir of Damdola.....	390
Inayat Qilla – Kitkot.....	391
Mulla Saiyid	392
January 2010 – Damdola.....	394
Swiss Couple	396
Spring - 2012.....	397
Summer of 2012	397
Road Operating Days {ROD}	398
ROD Routes Tochi Scouts	400
IED.....	401
May 2012.....	402
6 th May 2012	403
1400 -1700 hours. 6 th May 2012.	404
7 th May 2012.	406
Afghan National Army.....	407
Life in MiranShah	408
Winter of 2012	410
19 th October 2012.....	411
Evening 19 th October 2012.....	412

ARYANS WARS 1947 - 2012

International relations is clearly not a subject in the ordinary sense of the word....it is not a single subject but a blend of subjects, law, history, economics, political science and geography¹. Theory, is derived from Greek 'to look out' at, or 'to watch'.² There are many theories of International relations but broadly they can be classified as Normal or Normative Theory, the Realist Theory given by Morgenthau in 1952 describes 'interest as power' which in this means national interest but it is equally difficult to describe what national interest stands for, Morgenthau, himself goes to explain that National Interest has two elements, one that is logically required and in that sense necessary and the one that is variable and determined by circumstances.³

Republic. Man by nature is timid and peaceful and at the least danger his first reaction is to flee, he only fights through the force of his habit and experience. Honour, interest, prejudice, and vengeance all those passions which make him brave. **Aristotle** kept the war separate from political philosophy, **Plato** declares that military science and theory of warfare form a part of art of citizenship referring here to skill in the use of arms⁴. Plato was born in Athens, he was student of Socrates and teacher of Aristotle, his classical work is Republic, which is the base of morality and everything related to it. Morality to Plato was a key factor of the human life and the debate about what is good and what is bad starts from here, Plato did not reach any conclusion in his dialogues other than that morality is something which only an individual can judge what is wrong and what is right. 'Since it is

¹ N.D.Palmer & H.C.Perkins, ed, *International Affairs, the World community in Transition*, second edition, {Stevens & Sons, London, 1957} , p-XII.

² Abdul Said, ed, *Theory of International Relations the crisis of Relevance* {Prentice Hall, New Jersey 1968} p-43

³ Stanley Hoffman, ed, *Contemporary Theory in International Relations* { Prentice, New Jersey, 1960} p,32, 73.

⁴ M.G. Forsyth edited, *The theory of International Affairs selected texts from Gentili to Traitschke* {George Allen, London, 1970}, p - 18

the expressed opinion that morality is one of those paramount good things which are worth having not just for the consequences but also and especially for themselves... so it is not enough just to demonstrate that morality is better than immorality, show us why one of them, in and of itself makes anyone who possess it good'.⁵ For Plato the education was the most important thing, at that time the children were imparted physical and cultural studies at Athens and in Plato's view the cultural education takes precedence over physical

HISTORICISM.

History is never constructed from narratives but from documentsⁱ, it is one view and other is that history can be constructed rather it is present irrespective of the documents. By history I mean research conducted scientifically.ⁱⁱ

What is History? It can be a history as what has actually happened in the past, or history as our inevitably imperfect understanding of what happened in past or history as the continuing attempt by professional historians to extend our knowledge and improve our understanding of what happened in the past.ⁱⁱⁱ **Carr Edward.** *What is History ?* New York: Alfred Knopf, 1964. writes, before you study History study the historian and before you study historian study his historical and social environments. {P.54}^{iv}

Kelley, Donald. *Faces of History, Historical inquiry from Herodotus to Herder.* London: Yale university Press, 1998. History as a concept and term is a European perspective, a Greek creation {p.3} Like Epic poets the historians have been fascinated by the questions of origins, of first causes, which usually meant the founding of particular natural traditions....not from the start of dynasty but from the creation of the universe. {p.8} The first law of history according to Cicero is to tell the truth and mix in nothing that was false {p.9}, like philosophy history concerned itself with questions of cause and effects, {p.10} History is often regarded as form of memory, History has a pattern that could be explained {p.21}.

Herodotus was born in 484-428 BC, than Thucydides {460BC}, he wrote a history of Peloponnesian war, he served as general in the wars, later dismissed, he died in the hand of an assassin.. Polybius {200BC} he wrote two centuries after Herodotus and Thucydides, he wrote about the rise of Rome, he was also a general in the army and exiled to Rome. His history starts with 220BC, the various wars in Greece, Asia, Italy and Africa, he invented the term **pragmatic history**. Lelio Torelli was the first to associate history with the notion of method, another thinker Francis Baudoun of France noted that like law, history is a form of wisdom, Baudoun prized eye witness testimony, failing this he turned to monuments and records {p.194}. Jean Bodin was of the opinion that History is above all sciences, according to Bodin, history comprises of human natural and divine, he codified history, a bibliography of 282 items {p.198}, men who compares modern historians with the ancients and ancients with each other and adds physical considerations also, will make the most certain judgement about history, {p.198}.

⁵ Plato *Republic*, a new translation by Robert Waterfield, { Barnes & Noble, NY, 1993}, p-56

Kahler, Erich. *The Meaning of History*. New York: George Brazitter, 1964. Where there is no happening there is no history...thus the more flow of events become meaningful the more it becomes history {p.23} Historia is a Greek word meaning Physical Research {p.25}. **Lester Stephen** . *Probing the past a guide to the study of and teaching history*. {Boston: Allyn & Bacon. 1974}, History is also a story, history is past but we cannot reconstruct past in totality, we are more interested in those acts of pasts which have importance today as well, {Jhonson Arnold. *The Historian and historical Evidence* .New York: Charles Scribner 1926 .}

The main debate is whether history to be considered as an science or as a art, German philosopher Leopold Von Ranke wrote *Wie Es Eigentlich ge we sen* ‘ as it actually happened’. {Ibid, p.9} the scientific method is in which the historians proceed through a steps, First he a perceives a problem , something unknown about the past, an unsatisfactory explanation. In the second step , historian reads and forms about an idea or hypothesis and in third step, historian collects facts and data to verify his hypothesis and finally he draws his conclusion {p.22}. thus history does not exist apart from facts, thus Historical fact is a fact about the past , it may be true or false, thus take the example of Alexander the Great being wounded in 326 B.C, now it cannot be proved, because it cannot be repeated, therefore statement of one person becomes all important , in one sense there are no facts in history ‘fact’ is inferred from certain tangible tracts {p.24}.

Hypothesis and Theory. Historical inquiry does not strictly bind itself to the scientific model of investigation, historian is in most instances searching for the unique and particular case, not for the general and universally applicable principle or law. {p.31}. His goal is less to verify or refute a hypothesis and more to reconstruct the past as accurately as possible {p.32}. Historical facts are not manna, facts are worthless unless someone does something with them and the job of historic is to make them tell the truth as fully as possible , historian based his work upon facts but he also recognizes the problems attached to them . theory is used interchangeably with hypothesis, however a theory is much broader and more encompassing than a hypothesis. In science , theory is supported by general laws, however in history, there are no general laws. An example of historical hypothesis is that of Waith Prescott Webb hypothesis ‘ that conflict with the plain Indians resulted from cross movement, that is , the Indians moved northward-southward, while American settlers moved westward. Arnold Toynbee’s theory of civilisation ‘ which broadly consist of numerous hypothesis and generalisation^{vi} {p.33}

Historical frame of Reference , historian select and arranges facts in some kind of pattern, he interprets them and he draws generalisation from them, all these actions require him to order knowledge and this ordering of knowledge , we shall call his ‘frame of reference’. Basic element of historians frame of reference is is his underlying philosophy, assumptions and beliefs which he holds about his nature of man and the universe, his metaphysical , epistemological and axiological positions.

Gottschalk Louis *Understanding History* New York: Alfred Knopf, 1969. Writes Historian cannot avoid and therefore it is better that he should be openly committed to some philosophy and some code of ethics^{vii}.

Historian is a living thing, he is a political animal, he believes either in democracy or in dictatorship. **Frontier thesis**^{viii} Fredrick turner Jackson 's Frontier Thesis, in it Turner argued that peculiar frontier condition in USA contributes significantly to the formation of the national character and the spirits of American , he had studied biology, physics and chemistry and as such he employed and modified the Germ theory to support his thesis {p.44}. The facts without interpretation do not constitute history {p.62}. A historical generalisation is a statement or a term which has been informed inductively from a number of particular cases instances or events, historical generalisation suggests some regularity or pattern of events, ideas and human actions which is of historical significance. **Frontier thesis**^{ix} {p.66}

Synthetic generalisation , it requires the historian to ferret out some uniformities from a mass of a material on a broad topic such as war or revolution, predictive generalisation is almost like a law.

Historiography at its highest level of originality may attempt an enquiry which former generators called philosophy of history in an application at a lower level it is deep structured inquiry until around 1700 , the idea of a period of history designating a stretch of time with an internal unity and more importantly the notion of 'source' understood as composing one of the elements out of which a historical text might flow, just as river originates in its source, William Robertson seems to have been the first to use the word in that sense in 1777, he was principal of Edinburgh University^x . Karl Marx has written in the opening sentence of his Communist Manifesto 'The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle' where as Emile Durkheim {1858-1917} intermingle the history and sociology 'How' becomes important .Wilhelm Dillthey produced a critique of scientific methods in humanities, he was consumed that history moves in a pattern, according to laws^{xi}.

On what should we base our narrative if not on living knowledge...this equally true of modern history, where the nature of the subject makes it inevitable that much will remain hidden for a long time and where an author will have no means other than his suspicion with which to discover {or perhaps conceal} events which he will nonetheless present as recognised truth, facts which later come to light reveal the attempted reconstruction as erroneous, the chief requirement for an historical work remains always that it be true; that events actually happened as they are described, the scholarly service performed by the work is by far the most important .^{xii}

Gardiner,Patrick. Ed. **Theories of History** .Illinois: Free Press,1959. The term philosophy of History ahs been applied somewhat in-discriminatively to all speculative schemes {p.7}. Giambattista Vico {1668-1774} born in Naples , wrote New science {1725}, in which he propounded the a 'Cyclic theory of History' in which human nations passes through inevitably certain distinguishable stages of development, he believed that unlike world of natural object about which the God alone knows , the world of nations or human history has in fact been created by men and is there fore something which men can hope to know, {p.10}

Karen Katajin highlights the **History and Repetition**^{xiii}, from ancient times it has been said that history repeats itself, in truth people study history precisely because it is not a

onetime phenomenon but rather maintains the possibility of recurrence. Does the repetition of history actually exist? Such questions have never been properly considered for even if they intuitively acknowledge the repetition of history scholars aspiring to be scientific refrain from taking on the issue for the fear of rendering their work unscientific. I believe in the existence of historical repetition, as well as in the possibility of engaging such a repetition scientifically, of course what is repeated is not the event itself but rather the structure. 'Kondratieff Wave', a sixty year business cycle, a theory of long wave authored by N.D. Kondratieff {1892-1938}. Repetition in history does not signify the recurrence of the same event, for repetition is possible only in terms of form {structure} and not event {content}.

Karl Marx stated while writing about the events of French coup of 1851, 'Hegel remarks somewhere that all facts and personages of great importance in world history occur as it were twice. He forgot to add; the first time as **tragedy second as farce**', Marx referred to the repetition of history of 1789 and later that of 1848, in the both cases, a revolution that overthrew the monarchy and aimed to establish a republic, resulted ultimately in imperial rule. *Men make their own history, but they do not make it as they please; they do not make it under self-selected circumstances, but under circumstances existing already, given and transmitted from the past. The tradition of all the generations of the dead weighs like a nightmare on the brain of the living. And just when they seem involved in revolutionizing themselves and things, in creating something that has never before existed, it is precisely in such periods of revolutionary crisis that they anxiously conjure up the spirits.*^{xiv}

Karl Jaspers^{xv} states that Man's history has largely disappeared from memory, only through investigation and research does it become accessible, foremost in 19th Century world history was seen as the history of West, where as in 20th century gives equal rights to all men where there are men there is history, In Western world, the philosophy of history was founded in the Christian faith, ranging from St Augustine to Hegel, All history goes towards and comes from Christ as quoted by Hegel.

William Edward Harpole Lecky, wrote Thoughts in history there are many different kind of history, which should be written in many different ways, a diplomatic, a military or a parliamentary history...the supreme virtue of the historian is truthfulness.^{xvi}

Alan Munslow writes^{xvii}, histories live the past and history exists in a synonymous relationship, based on fine related assumptions, historians statements are defensible empirically and to discover the meaning of the facts then to infer the causal relationship, this takes the form of hypothesis, to advance historical explanations, a truthful narrative and define history.

Lynn Hunt, in, *Writing History in the Global Era* states that in 1852/53, requirement for admission to the Harvard University required knowledge of algebra, geometry, Cesare's commentaries, select orations from Cicero.^{xviii} The Marxist view all history is driven by changes in the economic mode of production that shape conflicts between classes,^{xix}. Few paradigms in historical research are Marxist, Modernization which includes Durkheim and Weber, the Annales School and finally the Identity Politics especially in USA. The Annales School emerged in France in 1930-40, focussing on pre industrial societies, the main founder was Marck Bloch, Lucier Febvre and Ferdinand Braudel. They aimed at directing history

away from merely battles , treaties towards the social life , society, social groups and on collective narrative {p-16}. Annales School of historian believe that environment climatic and demography shapes human activity in a fundamental way. Since these factors change slowly over long periods of time neither revolution nor any other kind of short term political change concern them {p-17}.

Culturist theorist insists that culture has its own meanings own autonomous logic, language and cultural expressions that shape the social world. The term use to describe them are ‘cultural studies’ ‘past structuralism’ ‘past modernism’ ‘past colonialism’ ‘linguistic turn’ ‘cultural turn’..they all are like cousins and inter related terms.. area studies did not demand a specific theoretical commitment and could foster an interest in the particularities of different cultures{p-28}. First Coffee House opened in at oxford in 1650 by a Jew and by 1700 there were over 500 coffee houses in London alone. The term ‘class’ first appeared in 1790 in England, High Class, Middle Class and middling class, the term working class first appeared in in 1815 {p-87}. Sociology first appeared in in English in 1842 , it was used by Auguste Comte a French in 1830, given the variety of questions that call for a historical approach, no one paradigm is going to rule the roost {p-121}. The 1776 Declaration of Independence ‘When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another and to assume among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal status to which the Laws of nature and Naturist God entitled them, a decent respect to the opinion of mankind.

Lord Acton^{xx}, *Essays in the Liberal Interpretation of History*, writes a review on the thesis of Mr Buckle’s *History of Civilisation in England* which was first posted in Rambler in 1858 and reprinted in London. McMillan 1907 . History is a generalised assessment of the personal actions of men united in bodies for any public purpose and science is the combination of a great mass of similar facts into the unity of a generalisation , a principle , or a certainty by the recurrence of like events under given conditions , now can there be a science of history. Lord Acton is famous for his saying *Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Great men are almost always bad men.*"The man argument Lord Acton has forwarded is, that can we predict the actions of such men which Buckle has argued, that it can be. Acton went on to states that ,;there is no regularity in the throws of the dice taken ten and ten together, but in a ten thousand throws, we can predict with great confidence how many times sixes will be drawn, there is no possible certainty that any given individual will commit murder , but take a population of one hundred thousand and in agiven time someone or the other is sure to be found committing murder, when we say Law , we always think of some force or command...but Mr buckle by law , only means ‘numerical average’.{P-13}.

C.V.Wedgewood. in *The sense of past, thirteen studies in the theory and practice of history*,^{xxi} highlights the older historians concentrated more on nomenclature than on analysis , on ‘How’ the rather than ‘Why’ of history. The desire for withdrawal is often a powerful motive in driving the student towards the study of history. Marc Bloch in his *The Historian craft* wrote a resistance and published posthumously, That historian can only , in the last analysis , reconstruct the past by borrowing from and applying his own daily experience of

life {P-26}. The romantic approach to history, is in which a historian bred in the national loyalty as almost a natural law, find it extremely difficult to grasp the meaning of the different loyalties, no less strong, which have constructed and disciplined the political lenses of men in the past {p-35}.

Marc Bloch *The Historian Craft*^{xxii} states western man has always been historically minded, Christianity is the religion of the historians {p-4}, other religious systems have been able to form their beliefs and their rites on mythology nearly outside human time. The word History is very old, so old that men have sometimes grown weary of it {P-20}. History is the science of the past {p-22}, Historian is like a police magistrate who strives to reconstruct a crime he has not seen {p-48} An experience almost as old as the mankind has taught us that more than one manuscript has justified its date or origin, that all the accounts are not true {P-79}. On historical analysis, Bloch writes and quotes Ranke 'historian' has no other aim than to describe things as they happened'. Herodotus said 'to narrate what was'. The scholar records, better stills he invites the experience which may perhaps upset his most cherished theories {p138}. For the first tool needed by an analyst is an appropriate language , a language capable of describing the precise outlines of the facts {p157}. Historian speaks only with words, hence with those of his country. Regarding Historical causation, Bloch writes 'in vain positivism claimed to eliminate the idea of cause from science...every physicist, every biologist thinks in terms of 'why' and 'because' ...here Bloch gives the example of a man falling from precipice {p-190}. For historical reasoning, the most specific , the one which somehow represents the differentially element in the compound of generative inference is accorded the name of cause {p-192}. Laws of trajectory are as valid as for defeat as for victory; they explain both, they are useless as a proper explanation for either , for a doctor , the acuse of an epidemic is the multiplication of a microbe and its conditions the dirt...for sociologist, it would be poverty,{p-193}.

Herbert Fisher *Studies in history and politics*^{xxiii} on the importance of history , irrespective of whom has written , in his support of logic he highlights the history written by Ammanius Marcellinius the Roman Soldier, he approached history from a soldier's angle...he is indeed our principal authority on art of war in 4th century AD.'. {p-13}.

Hans Kohn *Reflections on Modern History, The historian and human responsibility*,^{xxiv} History has a two fold meaning , first of all it is a sequence of events...our word story is connected with the word History original meaning of the Greek word Historia , not so much the narrative of the events but their interpretations {preface}. The historian is a man who tries to find out what has happened in the course of time and to correlate the events within the limits of available material on the one hand , his intelligence, imaginations, ethical understanding, on the other , into a meaningful sequence. Perhaps the ancient Hebrews were the first people strongly conscious of their history, the past history of their tribe is to them always vividly present and continuous {P-4}. History is a process influenced by forces beyond man's grasp.

Hegel George Wilhelm Friedrich. *The Philosophy of History* translated Sibree,J.. New York, The Colonial Press, 1899. First Edition 1841.

Hegel defines three kind of histories the Original History, Reflective History and Philosophical History^{xxv}. In the first kind he mentions about Herodotus, Xenophon and Thucydides, they simply transferred what was passing in world around them{Ibid}. In reflective history, whose mode of representation is not really confined by the limits of the time to which it relates {p.4}this si what is known as Universal history. every writer of history proposes to himself an original method {ibid}.in this category he puts Livy, Diodorus, Siculus, Johannes Von Muller. In this category is Pragmatical History , when we have to deal with the past and occupy ourselves with a remote world. {ibid, p.5}another form of reflective history is Critical history , it is history of history a criticism of historical narrative and an investigation of their truth and credibility.

On Philosophy of History , Hegel dwells ‘thoughtful consideration of it {history’ {p.8} thought is indeed essential to humanity, it is this what distinguish us from brutes... philosophy brings with it to the contemplation of history, is the simple conception of Reason....that the history of the world presents us with a rational process., this conviction and intuition is a hypothesis in the domain of history as such, nature is an embodiment of reason, that it is unchangeably subordinate to universal laws...but to depict history is to depict the passion of mankind, the genius, the active powers, that play their part on the great stage.[ibid,p.13]....among the Ashantees the king inherits all the property left by his subjects at their death. ...among the negroes moral sentiments are quite weak or more strictly speaking non existent.[p.96]. tradition alleges that n former times a state composed of women made itself famous by its conquests, it was a state whose head was a woman. She is said to have pounded her own son in a mortar , to have besmeared herself with the bloodshe is said to have driven away or put to death all the males and commanded the death of all male children....an English traveller states that when war is determined on in Ashantee [p.100]

On India Hegel is off the mark with vague statements like India like China is a phenomenon antique as well as modern[p.139]...everything therefore –sun, moon, stars, the Ganges, the Indus beasts, flowers-everything is a god to it...the parrot , the cow the ape are likewise incarnations of god.[p.141].

Dilthey Wilhelm, *Pattern and Meaning in History thoughts on history and society*, ed, H.P.Rickman. New York: Harper Torch,1961.... **Dilthey 1833-1911 German**.

History is one of the forms of disciplined research by means of which the human mind satisfies its curiosity and orientates it self in world. [p.12] dilthey’s most original contribution to history , is his conception of understanding and interpretation , through which meaning is recaptured. [p.33]

Immanuel Kant {1724-1804} ‘*On History*’^{xxvi}, edited by Lewis White Beck, translated by Lewis White Beck and Robert Anchor and Emil L,Fackenheim {NewYork: Bobbs Merrill,1963}.

Kant wrote critique of pure reason and also the critique of practical reason, his first writing was in 1784, his two essays ‘what is enlightenment’ and ‘idea of a universal history from a cosmopolitan point of view’. What is enlightenment is the name of the essay and he

went on to describe ‘enlightenment is man’s reliance from his self-incurred tutelage, which is man’s inability to make use of his understanding without direction from another. Self incurred is this tutelage when its causes lies not in lack of reason but in lack of resolution and courage to use it without direction from another. Sapere Aude{dare to know} , **have courage to use your own reason**, this is the motto of enlightenment. This term was much used by President Musharraf in Pakistan during his tenure to highlight the intellectual state in country which was under the control of the religious leaders and scholars.

‘*In Idea for a Universal History from a cosmopolitan point of view*’ Kant highlights that what concepts one may hold from a metaphysical point of view, concerning the freedom of will, certainly its appearances which are human actions, like every other natural event are determined by universal laws , However obscure their causes , history , which is concerned with narrating these appearances permits us to hope that if we attend to the play of freedom of the human will in the large, we may be able to discover a regular movement in it {p-11}. Since the free will of man has obvious influence upon marriages, birth, deaths , they seem to be subject to no rule by which the number of them could be reckoned in advance, yet the annual table of them in major countries prove that they occur according to laws as stable as those of the unstable weather, which in the large we cannot determine but which in the large maintains the growth of the plants... in keeping with this purpose it might be possible to have a history with a definite natural plan for creatures who have no plan of their own.{p-12}.

Kant’s eight thesis are , first one state states ‘ all natural capacities of a creature are destined to evolve completely to their natural end.. If we give up this fundamental principle we no longer have a lawful but an aimless course of nature and blind chance takes the place of the guiding thread of reason. Second thesis ‘Inman, as the only rational creature on earth. Those natural capacities are directed to the use of his reason, are to be fully developed only in the race and not in the individual’.

The third thesis ‘nature has willed that man should by himself produces everything that goes beyond the mechanical ordering of his animal existence and that he should partake of no other happiness or perfection than that which he himself independently of instincts has created by his reason’.

The fifth thesis highlights that The greatest problem for the human race , to the solution of which nature derives man, is the achievement of a universal civic society which administers law among men’. The highest purpose of nature which is the development of all capacities which can be achieved by mankind is attainable only in society and more specifically in the society with the greatest freedom, such a society is the one,, in which there is mutual opposition among members, together with the most exact definition of freedom and fixing of its limits so that it may be consistent with the freedom of others{p-16}. These thought sand the ideas are almost in practice in the tribal areas of Pakistan, where the tribal society has given freedom to each member yet there is a limit to which the society has put a limitation so that the others can live in harmony with each other.

In the sixth thesis Kant goes on in a logical manner to point that ‘this problem is the most difficult and the last to be solved by mankind’ Man is an animal which if it lives among

others of its kind requires a master, for he certainly abuses his freedom with respect to the other men, he wishes to have a law which should restrict the freedom of others but where possible to exempt himself, the highest master should be just in himself yet a man.

Seventh thesis , ‘The problem of establishing a perfect civic constitution is dependent upon the problem of a lawful external relations among states and cannot be solved without a solution to the latter problem’ all wars are accordingly so many attempts to establish new relations among states and through the destruction or at least dismemberment of all of them to create new political bodies, purposeless savagery held back the development of the capacities of our race....same is done by the barbaric freedom of established states {pp.19-20}

Eight thesis deals with , ‘ The history of mankind, can be seen in the large as the realisation of nature’s secrets plan to bring forth a perfectly constituted state as the only condition in which the capacities of mankind can be fully developed and also bring forth that external relations among states which is perfectly adequate to this end.

Conjectural Beginning of Human History is another essay of Kant. Nomadic people recognising God alone as their lord a, city dwellers and farmers on the other hand have a human master in the form of government {p-65}

Perpetual Peace is another of Kant’s essay which highlights the kind of relationship which should exists among states for a long lasting peace, it is idealistic in nature. No treaty of peace shall be held valid in which there is tacitly reserved matter for a future war, otherwise a treaty would only be a truce, suspension of hostilities but not peace. No independent states large or small shall come under the dominion of another state by inheritance , exchange, purchase or donation , a state is not a ground , a piece of property , it is a society of men whom no one else has any right to command or disperse except the state itself. Standing armies shall in time be totally abolished for they incessantly menace other states by their readiness to appear at all times prepared for war, they incite them to compete each other in the number of armed men and there is no limit to this, {p87}, however periodic and voluntarily military exercises of citizens who thee by secure themselves and their country against foreign aggression are entirely different. To this he added three definitive articles

Constitution of every country state should be republican, this constitution is drawn by or established by firstly by principles of the freedom of the members of a society , secondly by principles of dependence of all upon a single common legislature and thirdly by the law of their equality P-95}. Second definitive articles ‘The law of nations shall be founded on a federation of free states’ states do not plead their case before a tribunal, War alone is their way of bringing suit.{p-98}. The third article states that ‘Law of world citizenship shall be limited to conditions of universal hospitality’ hospitality means the right of a stranger not to be treated as an enemy when he arrives in the land of another, one may refuse to receive him when this can be done, without causing his destruction: but so long as he peacefully occupies his place, one may not treat him with hostility. {p102}.

Karl Raimund Popper*The Poverty of Historicism*^{xxvii} {London:Routledge & Kegan, 1957}. The fundamental debate which Popper stated, is that there can be no laws prediction

of human of the course of human history by scientific or any other rational method. The paper was first read in January 1936 and Popper dedicated his book 'to the countless men and women of all creed or nation or races who felt victims to the fascist and communist belief in inexorable laws of historical destiny'. Popper argues in his book in a logical manner first putting the logic and doctrine and arguments of those historians who believe that history can also have laws like the physics and later in the book Popper gives the other side arguments, that there can be no laws applicable in history as in physics.

The main theme is that whether the laws of physics are applicable in theoretical social sciences, Whereas Galileo and Newton made Physics a success, Pasteur work in Biology, nothing concrete comes out in Social science les economics, there are two main school of thoughts in terms of methods in social science 'pro-Naturalistic' or 'Positivist' who favours the application of physical laws and 'Anti Naturalistic' or 'negatives' as the opposing social school. The attitude any researcher adopts largely depends upon his views about methods of Physics {Popper in introduction}.

Popper coins the term Historicism, as approach to the social science which assumes that Historical Prediction is their principal aim and this can be attained by discovering the rhythm, and pattern, laws, or trends that underline the evolution of society. Anti-Naturalistic Doctrine of Historicism, they believe or claim that some of the characteristics of Physics methods cannot be applied to the social sciences, Physical laws or the laws of nature are valid anywhere and always, on the other hand sociological laws or laws of social life, differ in different places of and periods {p-5}.

Physics depends upon generalisation, on the general uniformity of nature, upon the observation or assumption: that in similar conditions or circumstances similar things will happen, this principle is taken valid throughout space and time in the case of physics. Another key factor of physics is the experiment which implies artificial control, an artificial isolation and thereby ensures the reproduction of similar conditions, where circumstances are similar, similar things will happen {p-8}.

History may repeats itself but never on the same level, especially if the events concerned are of historical importance and if they exert a lasting influence on society {p.10}. It is conceivable that by analysing social life we may be able to discover and to understand intuitively how and why any particular event came about: that we may clearly understand its causes and effects...yet we may nevertheless find that we are unable to formulate any general laws, which would serve as descriptive in general terms, of such causal links {ibid}.

In exactitude of prediction, Popper highlights that for example, if it is predicted that shares will rise for three days and fall on fourth, than people will sell it on third day and then by decreasing the prices of the shares on the third day thus falsifying the prediction.{p.13}

Historicism, the analysis and explanations of various differences between the various sociological doctrines and schools. **Holism**, Social science deals with living like biology, thus it should be treated on biological science, the living are different from atomistic; thus Holistic manner{p.17}. a group founded by A & B will be different in characteristics from a group consisting of same number but formed by C and B, a group has a

history of its own and that its structure depends to a great extent on its history and that its structure depends to a great extent on its history, it is even conceivable that a group may keep much of its original character even all if all of its original members are replaced by other^{xxviii} {p.17}. All social groups have their own traditions, their own institutions their own rites. Historicism claims that we must study the history of the groups, its traditions and institutions, if, we wish to understand and perhaps to foresee, its future development {p.18}. Biological or organic theory, of social structure, the theory which interprets social groups by analogy with living organisms, indeed Holism is said to be characteristics of biological phenomenon is general and holistic approach is regarded as indispensable in considering how the history of various organisms influences their behaviours {p.19}.

Intuitive Understanding. We must try to understand intuitively the history of the various social groups, it is the doctrine. Popper highlights that it is important for the social scientist to understand the larger aspect of the action, such as raising of new army in a certain country, it is necessary to analyse the intentions, interest and so forth {p.21}. ***Inference by analogy***, It is a variant of intuitive understanding, from one historical period to the other, although no event can really repeat itself, yet, analogous tendencies may become dominant. Quantitative method in Physics like the reduction of aperture, increase the angle of diffraction, it becomes one cause and effect but its not possible in social science^{xxix} {pp.25-26}.

Essentialism versus Nominalism. Problem of universals, one of the oldest and most fundamental problem of philosophy, every science use the terms which are called Universal terms 'energy' 'velocity' 'carbon' 'whiteness' 'evolution' 'justice' and so on, thus we can have proper names like World War 1, Alexander The Great Hailey's Comet. On the other hand Nominalist held the view that universals differ from proper names, only in being to the members of a set or a class of a single thing rather than to just one single thing. The universal term 'white' for instance, seemed to this party to be nothing but a label attached to a set of many different things, 'snow' 'swan' table cloth etc, this is the doctrine of minimalist.

Essentialism are anti nominalists, 'we call each single white thing 'white' on account of a certain intrinsic property that it shares with other white things, namely whiteness, essentialism also relates to realism.

Realism derives from the assertion that universal objects, for instance the whiteness really exist, over and above single things and sets or groups of single things, these universal objects were called as Forms or Ideas, they are also known as Essences. *Methodological essentialist*, are inclined to formulate questions in such terms 'what is matter?', they penetrate to the essence of things where as Methodological Nominalists, favour words as merely useful instruments of description, they freely introduce new terms where ever necessary or by redefining the old terms where ever convenient.. {pp.28-29}.

Essence or the real character of a social group can reveal itself and be known, only through its history {p-33}.

The ***Pro-Naturalistic Doctrine of Historicism***. Popper in the second half of his book , now puts forward the ideas of Pro naturalisti Doctrine ‘sociology is like Physics a branch of knowledge which aims at the same time to be theoretical and empirical, by theoretical , we mean sociology has to explain and to predict events with the help of theories or of universal laws {which it tries to discover} by empirical , it means that , it is backed by experience , that the events it explains and predicts are observable facts and that observation is the basis for the acceptance or rejection of any propounded theory {p.35}. prediction with the help of laws and the testing of the laws by observation must be common to Physics and Sociology , this is {p.36} the Pro naturalistic doctrine. If it is possible for astronomy to predict eclipses, why should it not be possible for sociology to predict revolution, is the standard question which Popper raised. *Observational Basis*, history in this natural sense is the basis of sociology as all sociology is based upon observation and observation of the past are in the form of political chronicle, in brief *sociology is theoretical History* {p-39}. Popper takes the analogy between the astronomy and social science as the base of his arguments.

Historical Laws. Popper argues , sociology is theoretical history, its scientific forecast must be based on laws and since they are historical forecasts , forecasts of social change, they must be based upon historical laws, they have to be discovered {p.41}. Popper also highlight Historical Prophecy versus Social Engineering, the prophecy of Typhon coming and the construction of shelter as safety , is the utility of historical forecasts.

Historicism, the kind of history to which historicist wish to identify sociology, looks not only backwards to the past but also forwards to the future. {p.45}. it will be admitted by the defender of the rights of Pure or Fundamental researcher deserves every support in their fight against the narrow view, that scientific research is justified only if it proves to be a sound investment {p.55}. before we can collect data, our interest in data of a certain kind must be aroused, the problem always comes first {p.121}^{xxx}. initial conditions, historical interpretation, a selective point of view or focus of historical interest, if it cannot be formulated as a liable hypothesis {p.151}.

Richard Collingwood *The idea of History* {Oxford:1956}. Writes about history ‘ this book is an essay in the philosophy of history, the name philosophy of history was invented in the eighteenth century by Voltaire, a type of historical thinking in which the historian made up his mind for himself instead of repeating whatever stories he found in old books { in introduction} same phrase was used by Hegel but they meant a Universal History , a third use of the phrase is found in several 19th Century positivists for whom , it was the discovery of the general laws governing the course of history, discovering ‘ uniform laws’ Collingwood’s own idea of philosophy of history is a ‘philosophical inquiry into the nature of history’ {pp,1-7} history is a kind of research or inquiry , science is finding things out and in that sense history is a science, object of history is to ‘action of human beings that have been done in the past’ {pp.9-11}. How does history proceeds? History proceeds by evidence and its interpretations, only clue to what man can do is what man has done {p-10}. Theocratic history, a unscientific history rather a statement of what has been said {p.14}. Collingwood cites Herodotus as the creator of scientific history, although Herodotus in his account of India had never been to India and as such all his accounts are based upon what he listened from

others and that does not make him or his histories as scientific. Thucydides is the father of Psychological History which is not narrative facts for the sake of facts, its chief purpose is to affirm laws, psychological laws which is not an event, not yet a complex of events, it is an unchanging rule which governs the relations between events, what chiefly interests Thucydides is the laws according to which they happen. {p.30}. World history or Oecumenical history is attributed to Polybius, he has a definite theme, he has a story to tell, a story of notable and memorable things {p.34}. Herder was the first thinker to recognise a systematic way that there are differences between different kind of men {p.91} Marx asserted that historical events have natural cause {p.125}. Positivism may be defined as the philosophy acting in the service of natural science, they ascertain facts and secondly framing laws {pp.126-127} The laws are formed through generalisation from facts by induction {p.127} this is known as the Positivist Historiography. Comte proposed that there should be a new science called sociology, which was to begin by discovering the facts about human life and then go on to discover the causal connexions between these facts {p.128} the 19th century historians accepted the first aspect but rejected the second the discovery of general laws {p.130}. In England F.H. Bradley wrote in 1874 'The presupposition of Critical History' what the critical historian has to do is to decide whether the persons whose testimony he is using were on this or that occasions judging correctly or erroneously {p.137}^{xxxi}

Collingwood stated that 'every historian would agree, I think that history is a kind of research or enquiry' idea of history, p.9. {Collingwood Richard *Essays in the Philosophy of History* University of Texas:1967.} The philosophy of history therefore is the study of historical thinking, not only the psychological analysis of its actual procedure but the analysis of the ideal which it sets before itself^{xxxii} Philosophy is thinking about the world as a whole, to study the nature of selected parts of the world is to be scientist; to study its nature as a whole is to be philosopher.^{xxxiii} If there is to be a philosophy of history, history must be something more than a trade or amusement, it must be universal and necessary human interest. At bottom the attempt to construct a universal history failed, because it involved confusion between history and science, they are both forms of knowledge, involving observation and thought and requiring highly developed technical methods. In science the individual fact is of importance only so far as it illustrates a general law, whether Newton's apple really fell or not is not important as long as we grasp the Newton's law of gravitation. In history, the opposite is true, the individual fact is the end and general law is of importance only so far as it enables us to determine the fact. {p.133} leaflet No.79, p.133.

Dray William, *History as Re-Enactment R.G. Collingwood's idea of history*. Oxford University, 1995.

The first task is to set out in a little detail what Collingwood means when he insists that historical understanding requires a re-enactment of past experience or a rethinking of past thought.^{xxxiv} The re-enactment doctrine was first expressed in Collingwood's lectures in 1928...auditor reconstructs it mentally or at least follow a present performance

Polybius of Megalopolis a second century BC, Greek historian, wrote *The Histories*^{xxxv}, In 3rd Century BC Rome was ruled by Emperors, it was in 509 BC that it was transformed into Republic, between 280-275 BC, she seen off the threat of Greek. First Punic

War 264-241 BC was against Carthage, Second Punic War 218-201BC, in which Hannibal won at Cannae {216BC} but later lost at Zama {201BC}. Polybius set off to explain how Rome conquered and unified the world 220-167BC; Polybius believed that one of the vital qualification for writing history was practical political and military experience, he himself was son of a Greek general.^{xxxvi} There is no better correction of human behaviour than knowledge of past events, after all, is there anyone on earth who is so narrow minded or uninquisitiveness that could fail to want to know how and thanks to what kind of political system almost the entire known world was conquered and brought under a single empire of the Romans, in less than fifty –four years .^{xxxvii}

James Breasted,. *The Conquest of Civilisation*. Edited by Edith Ware. NewYork: Literary Guild of America,1938.

Breasted wrote and noted that the history of the ancient world was largely made up of the struggle between the Southern Semitic line and the Northern Indo-European Line, in the end, Indo European gain victory^{xxxviii}

Raflaub, Kurt. and Nathan Rosenstein. Ed. *War and society in the ancient and Medieval World, Asia, the Mediterranean, Europe and Mesopotamia* . London: Centre for The Hellenic Studies, trustees for Harvard University,1999.

Wrote ‘in 1500-500 B.C.E called the spring and Aukimen period ‘warfare was an integral and essential part of the religious systems, it could be claimed that the state and social order were entirely dependence for their existence on warfare and sacrifice.^{xxxix} They further write ‘ that villages definitely began to be protected by deep ditches from about 4000B.C.E {p.49}. War has been known in japan since about 300BC; The Chronicles of japan, a court history was compiled in 720 AD. {p.49}. The most enduring relation were regional and factional unfortunately , our sources do not give us precise number for the armies of Philip or Alexander in relation to the total population {p.174}

Maier,Berhard. *The Celts a History from the Earliest times to the Present*, trans Kevin Windle, Edinburgh: Edinburgh University,2000.

The term Celts stands for a variety of central European peoples with whom the Greeks and Romans came into contact from 6th Century B.C, These are commonly known today as Germanic...all statements about their culture and religion are stereo typed, Celts are also for linguistic facts ‘Celtic’ was the designation for a group of related languages evolved from a common ancestor...thus they form western most branch of Indo –European family.^{xl}

Ross, Anne. *Everyday life of the Pagan Celts*. London: Putnam,1956. On Celts further writes , in pagan Celtic societies, war was regarded as the norm and highly desirable; and fighting and success in a single combat were right and proper for the young warrior and hero effect...by alarm, any fancied insult resulted in an instant seizing of weapons.^{xli}

Hutton Webster *Ancient Civilisation*, Chicago, Heath,1931. Notes that India was better known than China...one of the most fertile territories on the globe {p.29} The Punjab was settled by Indo-European people sometimes after 2000B.C; they also spread over the valley of the Ganges and so brought all Northern India under their control^{xlii}

Hutton was a Ph.d professor in University of Nebraska in *Readings in Ancient History* Boston, Heath, 1913. He notes that Alexander the Great was also surprised that Porus did not cower in spirit but advanced to meet him as one brave man would meet another brave man. {p.147}^{xliii}.

H.G.Wells in his *A short History of the World*, notes that ‘historians are for the most part very scholarly men, now a days, they go in a fear rather of small errors than of disconnectedness, they dread the certain ridicule of a wrong date mark than the disputable attribution of a wrong value {p.3}^{xliv}.

Martin Rex. *Historical Explanations re-enactment and practical inference*. London: Cornell, 1977. One of my principal concern in this study is to determine whether universal hypothesis are logically required by the explanations which historians and other social scientists give of human actions, and whether their use would commit us to accepting some versions of universal regularities in mind and behaviour- in particular that version provided in the uniformity conception of human nature {p.21}

History is paramount in understanding the warfare, it causes are numerable, ranging from self-defence, defence of property to ideologies; although certain thinkers tend to differ for instance **Hugo Grotius** {1583-1645} considers those wars as just which are undertaken against those who have committed sin against the nature⁶ on the other hand . Grotius is regarded as father of international law, he wrote ‘On the laws of war and peace ‘ in 1625. He stressed upon that states should be treated as individuals and he accepted ‘natural Law’ as ‘right reason’ as the primary basis for determining rules for the rightful conduct of state; he argued for freedom of seas.

Alberto Gentili {1552-1608} is of the opinion that religion is an individual matter and as such religious wars cannot be justified. Gentili also saw international affairs from a secular point of view instead of religious, ‘ Let theologians keep silent about matters outside their province’. Gentili wrote about ‘International Law as applied to War’, he primarily contends that no previous law on warfare has been given earlier thus there is a need to have them. The main issue is that all participants waging a war considers themselves justified, thus it is difficult to lay the blame on any one individual for waging the war. This simple equation becomes monstrous when religion is included as the main cause of waging war, whereas for non-religious issues the way out or compromise can be made by highlighting the logic but even the logic fails in matter of religion. Whether it is just to wage war for the sake of religion? remains the cardinal point of Gentili and he gives his judgement as religion being an individual act and as such cannot be justified as the just cause of waging war. Hugo Grotius differ on the ground as ‘ Not on grounds of right in battle formed but rather with the sword do men seek to enforce their claim’. And his classic is ‘when I am in arms , am I to think of laws’. Grotius was of the opinion that history is important in understanding the laws of nature⁷, as it supplied both illustration as well as the judgement. The legality of war in his opinion was based upon its justification ‘ those wars are unjustified which are taken without

⁶ Ibid, p-73.

⁷ Abdul Said, ed, *Theory of International Relations, the crisis of Relevance* {Prentice Hall, New Jersey, 1968} p-62.

any cause' and as regarding the causes , he differs not from the logic ' first, defence of self and property'.

Another philosophical view as expressed by **Emmerich De Vattel**⁸ {1714-1767} revolves around two principles, first one declares that '**regular war as regards its effects must be accounted just on both sides**' and second principles govern **whatever is permitted to one because of the state of war is also permissible to the other**'⁹. Laws of nation is a famous work of Vattel and it has following segments , the natural law, the law taught by nature to all animals. Civil law is the one which is established by the people themselves and lastly Laws of nation which are laws established by nations. Vattel observation is made upon the Roman's Ingentium which were given by Emperor Justinas. Hobbs also contemplated on the issue and agreed that 'natural law for men and natural law for nation' principals of both are same. Since nations are composed of men who are by nature free and independent and who before the establishment of civil society lived together in the state of nature, such nations or sovereign states must be regarded as so many free persons living together in the state of nature.¹⁰

Danger and death are results of state of nature, there is no war between the man it is only between the states¹¹ wrote **Jean-Jacques Rousseau** {1712-1778, he also author social contract}. Man by nature was peaceful and timid to him, at the least danger , his first action is to flee, he only fights through the force of his habit and experience. However interest, prejudice, and vengeance all these passions which make him brave danger and death are remote from him in the state of nature¹²

HISTORICAL SETTING

The history of mankind is obscure and still shrouded in mystery despite our travelling to the space on a regular basis. Our origin is not clear, there are varying theories and philosophies to highlight from where we humans have taken spring, geologist who study the life of the earth are confident to celebrate its billion years¹³ birthday and philosophers question what was there when this earth was not there?. From historian point of view basing upon the visible evidence in the form of available texts, archeological remains and on logic the present day civilization dates back to almost 7000 years before Christ the earliest civilizations originated in the Asia mainly in the east on the banks of great rivers like Nile, Euphrates, Yellow and Indus.

⁸ Vattel ,a swiss wrote Laws of Nation and introduced the term Balance of Power.

⁹ M.G. Forsyth edited, *The theory of International Affairs selected texts from Gentilli to Traitschke* {George Allen, London, 1970}, p 110.

¹⁰ Theory of international Affairs selected texts, p-103.

¹¹ M.G. Forsyth edited, *The theory of International Affairs selected texts from Gentilli to Traitschke* {George Allen, London, 1970}, pp, 167-170.

¹² Ibid, p-170

¹³ **Earth sciences.**" *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online Academic Edition.* Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2012. Web. 16 Feb. 2012. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/176118/Earth-sciences>>

By 6000 or 7000 B.C. there were already quasi-civilized communities in lower Mesopotamia and in Egypt, there first appear cities, temples, systematic irrigation, and evidences of a social organization rising above the level of a mere barbaric village-town. In those days the Euphrates and Tigris flowed by separate mouths into the Persian Gulf, and it was in the country between them that the Sumerians built their first cities. About the same time, for chronology is still vague, the great history of Egypt was beginning.¹⁴

Whereas the history or the epigraphy of Nile and Euphrates has been able to pass down to us the culture and religion of these two great civilisations in the form of tablets and seals which inform us of the deities, the codes the life pattern of those ancients people with certainty, we know that Gilgames fighting with lions that dates back to 3000 years BC, it is 1 and half inch in length and is preserved in British Museum, there are quite a number of seals showing men with wings, heavily maned lions then there are very elaborate seals which depicts a sow walking with almost half a dozen of her siblings through a field¹⁵, but no such thing or evidence was available for India other than the oral traditions which are called Vedas before the archaeological excavation carried out in 1922 in Indus Valley which have been termed as one of the greatest of our time. It is a coincidence that two of the greatest riddles of human civilization were unlocked in the same century with the finding of the Pyramids. there fore one has to look into the Nile and Euphrates cultures of the past to find the similarities in the Indus Valley civilization and as such to fill the vacuum .

The Egyptians religious traditions that has been deciphered from these seals highlights that they had a high priest who was responsible for all the ceremonies for the reason that the ruling princes were too busy with the state craft to have time to carry out these ceremonies to the perfection otherwise it was the princes in whom the divinity was placed, these chief priest was called Uibu and he would insist on the human cleanliness by washing, each act of sacrifice contained an accompanying number of words whose die sequence and harmony must be adhered ‘ *one false note a single discord between the succession of gestures and the utterance of the sacramental words, any hesitation , any awkwardness in the accomplishment of the rite and sacrifice was vain*’¹⁶ thus a breed of professional priests emerged whose main task was to carry out these duties on behalf of the ruling class, the gods of Egypt were numerous they wee rather a nation of gods they had gods for every part of their life, sun was a living god, their religious belief was based upon the idea that heat of sun fermented the soil of the Nile and from thee the creatures wee born, there was a class system in Egypt, The priests were exempted from the military duty and also from certain taxes, they lived on the sacrificial meat and the milk offered by the commoners, they would carry out prediction for the rulers.

Chaldeans of Euphrates{3800 BC} on the other hand were not that good in city construction as the Egyptians were , yet their temples were as high as possible to construct

¹⁴ A Short History of the World ,H. G. Wells New York The Macmillan & Company 1922 , Chapter XV

¹⁵ Dawn of Civilisations, the seals are marked as such majority of them are in British Museum and Louvre Museum in Paris.

¹⁶ Ibid,p-124

{tower of Babel}¹⁷ one of the leading historian of Chaldea was Berossus ,one of the key features of their seals were the depiction of fights with the lions,hunting of lions with arrows,capturing the horses with lasso, depiction of half man half fish deities, horses being hunted by the dogs,they show that hogs have been tamed and so were ass,ox,goat and sheep and yet the horses were untamed as back as 3000 BC, and extraordinary seal depicts a bull with precise anatomy and however there is no depiction of elephants. The concept of the world conceived by the Chaldeans was around their first king named Alorus who ruled for over 36000 years and they believed that ‘ In the time when the gods were not created not one as yet,when they had neither been called by their names...then Lukhmu and Lakhama were the first to appear...in the time when nothing existed which was called heaven above and nothing below had as yet received the name earth there existed Apsu the ocean’¹⁸ thus the creation of the earth according to Chaldean was based upon the water and they further had the belief that a great flood came,similar to the Egyptians the Chaldeans also believed in the divinity of the king partly heredeity and partly selection and they also had a high priest for religious ceremonies called ‘ Ishshakku’,their deity was goddess Allat represented with body of a disformed woman with half lion, having wings and serpents in her hands her children were two lions, the seals highlights a dog being on a leash apart from an oxen seal which is almost an replica of the seal that was excavated from Moenjodaro..

Historians have marked seven different groups which existed in early civilization which dates to 3000 years BC they are Hebrews, Egyptians, Armeans, Phoenicians, Hitties, Armenians and Persians and certainly Chinese have to be added in this list. Iranians were nature loving people who had a kind of monotheistic religion based upon a good and evil character the Mazda{wise} and Ahura{lord} were worshipped and supremec deity was Ahura Mazda and this praying was done without any temple or ritual but fire was used for this purpose in the open and preferably on top of mountain, the Iranian god of war was Mithra, the evil was Ahriman. Cyaxares {625-593 BC} and his decendents Cyrus {550-530BC} were able to conquer the Greek cities of asia minor and later to extend their rule in the east to the inclusion of the Indus river and to its upper mouth at Taxila which the Persians called gandhara and Sindhu¹⁹ respectively ,they made a satrapy{province } of this Indain conquest, later Cyrus commissioned a Greek adventurer to sail down the Indus to have a feasibility of trade and shipping in the river,however the history is silent as why the Cyrus did not pursued the idea of finding the origin of the Indus. This is the first record of India or the Sindhu {Indus river} that is in written form.

Darius I {521-485BC} had his empire divided in twenty satrapies,The Greek cities which were ruled by the Persians revolted in 490 BC and the resultant battle of Marathon as such marked the beginning of the end of Persian hold over the Greeks however Xerxes another Persian made an attempt to reconsolidate his empire but again a string of defeats at Salamis and Mycale in 480 BC further weakened the Persian hold.All this has passed down to

¹⁷ Ancient Fragments of the Phoenicians,chaldeans,Egyptians,Persians,Indians and other writers,Issac Cory,{Pickering,London,1832}pp-31-34

¹⁸ Dawn of Civilisations,p-563

¹⁹ *Cyrus the Great*,Jacob Abbott,{Harper & Brothers,NewYork,1903},p- also see *Shohrab & Rustam an episode* ,Matthew Arnold & Marrie Snell{Warner ,Chicago,1896},p-82

us through the Greek historians among whom Herodotus is called the father of history had no knowledge of India other than that 'eastern part of India is rendered desert by sand {east of Indus and south of Punjab}'²⁰. The birth of this Zoroastrian religion and the rise of Persian empire are rather synonymous to each other it initially took birth in Parthia {northern Iran}, where one of the local ruler adopted it and soon in the time of the Cyrus {550-530 BC} it became a kind of official religion. Zoroastrianism flourished in the land of ancient Iranians [Aryao Danhavo] who were living in eastern part of the Persian Empire which is modern day Afghanistan and the area up till Indus and Baluchistan. Zoroaster was the son of Poroushaspa therefore he also belonged to a rich family his exact date of birth is not very precise but it is certain that he underwent hardships in his preaching which were to get away from false gods and to worship Mazda the one true god thus his followers are called Mazdayasni, it is probable that Zoroaster lived in the time of King Gushtasp, he was murdered in the city of Balkh, his time is 1200 B.C.²¹, thus his time and the end of Indus Valley civilization almost coincides.

VEDAS

But there was more to India than just the mere desert which Herodotus observed but it was discovered with the archeological discovery of Moen Jo daro and Harappa in 1920's, but before this discovery there were oral traditions in the India which are called Vedas [means knowledge] which are four in series the first one was composed in 11th or 12th century BC and is called Rig Veda the second is called Samaveda and is composed of hymns of the Rig Veda the third Veda was composed in 10th or 9th century BC and is known as Yajurveda and is composed of prayers the fourth veda is called Atharvaveda²², in short the Rig veda is the oldest and other have been derived from it, Rig Veda is thus not only a poem but a history²³, but what kind of history does this Vedas give us

The Vedas speak of the battles that took place between the Aryans and the Dravidians. Aryans had no rituals neither they had any temples, for Aryan his horse was the most sacred and he used it in a chariot, Aryan was fond of warfare and Indra was the god the hero warrior for whose pleasure and favour Aryan would sacrifice the bull and the cow, Varuna was another god of Aryans which looked after the sun and sky 'sun and stars were his eyes' Rudra was the god of the rain and later known as the Shiva. The hymn of creation

Then was not non-existent nor existent: there was no realm of air, no sky beyond it. What covered in, and where? and what gave shelter? Was water there, unfathomed depth of water? Death was not then, nor was there aught immortal: no sign was there, the day's and night's divider. That One Thing, breathless, breathed by its own nature: apart from it was nothing

whatsoever.

Darkness there was: at first concealed in darkness this All was indiscriminated chaos.

²⁰ The History of the Arts and The Sciences of the Ancients, Charles Rollin, {Blackie, Glasgow, 1829}, p-570

²¹ A Brief sketch of Zoroastrian Religion & Customs, An essay, Ervad Sheriarji Dadhabhai Bharucha {Bombay 1893}

²² History of Asia, Volume I, Woodbridge, p-131-134

²³ The Rig Veda a History, Raeshwar Gupta {Jogendra Nath, Chittagong, 1904}, p-12

All that existed then was void and form less: by the great power of Warmth was born that
Unit24

There are vedas for the gods for daily life like marriage vow which is almost as true for today as it was thousand years ago

The Indus valley is 950 miles long and 700 miles wide, its slope is steep 1:7,000 nearly double of the Egyptian civilization and Harappa and Mohenjo daro were its two main cities 350 miles apart with Harappa at the upstream, Harappa destroyed the Mohenjo daro and its subsidiaries ,therefore it has been established and speculated that the people of Harappa were more ferocious and more advance as to cause the destruction of downstream riparian culture but from where these harappians came is not certain and when they started is also not sure but what is certain that it finished in 1500 B.C., Aryans were carried out wholesale massacre of the mohenjo daro and adjoining centres there is another theory that since Harappa was more agriculturist in outlook thus it escaped the destruction but it is possible that Mohenjo-Daro was destroyed by the harrappian and they were the Aryans in deed. About the culture of Harappa 'it is difficult to say whether slavery existed'²⁵, on religious side nothing great is understood about these civilization as not many artifacts have been discovered apart from the statue of a dancing girl from Mohenjo-Daro and a dancing boy in Harappa yet it is established that people of Mohenjo daroo did worshipped a god in the form of a human.'4500 years ago human development reached a striking peak in the Indus Valley cities of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro'²⁶. Regarding Aryans the mystery deepens as to who they were it is again established that they had narrow skull and light skinned and this to some extent is related to even present day high esteem for fair skin and colour which is notably regarded as a nobility in the person, *These Indo-Europeans were white men like the Semites but they spoke a different language they had lived among the peaks which surround the plateau of Iran and that are why we call them Aryans Under the leadership of Zarathustra (or Zoroaster) who was their great teacher many of them had left their mountain homes to follow the swiftly flowing Indus River on its way to the sea.*²⁷

'Aryans ,Persians all originated from Pamirs'²⁸ it is very much possible that these Aryans came down with the flow of the river from its source in the far off mountains .There exist no literary tradition throwing light on the origin and growth of great cities of north west India²⁹. The archeological excavation by John Marshall in 1922 brought up the Indus Valley civilization and also another civilization which strangely did not existed on the banks of river as all other great civilization does, this was the Mehri and Kulli which were found in the West of the Indus ,a an aerial reconnaissance highlights the signs of water and dry beds of the river are there which can be distinguished in the background of the brown mountains these

²⁴

²⁵ Ibid p-476

²⁶ Cambridge Encyclopedia of South Asia ,1982, p-9

²⁷ The Story of Mankind By Hendrik Van Loon, Ph.D. November 27, 2009 [EBook #754]

²⁸ *Sohrab & Rustam an episode*,Matthew Arnold& Marie Snell,{werner,Chicago,1896},p-82.

²⁹ *History of mankind volume One* Jacques Houtet & Sir Leonard Wooley{Harper & Row,NY,1962}a UNESCO project ,p 451-458, also see *Glimpses of World History* Jawaharlal Nehru{John Day ,NY,1934}

civilizations especially the Mihi or Mehrgarh are on the same track which is still used by the caravans the famous Bolan Pass, on the other hand another signs of civilization are to be found in the Kot Diji area which has been called as the Chando Darro³⁰.

Hinduisim or Brahminism

The knowledge about the Aryan way of life is more or less transmitted orally they used to sacrifice human life occasionally but generally it was in the form of cattle and horses³¹, these oral traditions are called Vedas and it gives an insight into the life of Aryans and of that period which exists between 1700-900 B.C., The Vedas thus reflects on the cultural and life pattern of the Aryans and from them one can assume that Aryans were a happy and cheerful race who was at times scared of his wife and his mother in law as well especially after loosing in the gambling. Puranas which are old Sanskrit text dating from 900-500 B.C., they are religious fables.

"The Rishi replied, Vedas, is a sacred work... In this world, when it was destitute of brightness and light, and enveloped all around in total darkness, there came into being, as the primal cause of creation, a mighty egg,. From this egg came out the lord Pitamaha Brahma,.. After these were produced the wise and most holy Brahmarshis, and the numerous Rajarshis. So the water, the heavens, the earth, the air, the sky, the points of the heavens, the years, the seasons, the months, the fortnights, called Pakshas, with day and night in due succession. And thus were produced all things which are known to mankind.. From these are descended the family of the Kurus, ; also rules for the conduct of mankind; also histories and discourses with various srutis;. It is elucidated by other Shastras, and comprehendeth the sense of the four Vedas³².

The Brahmin gave the formality to this existing life pattern there is definite account of how a group in ancient world becomes the ruler of a person and society's rituals but this is how the Brahmin became the soul master of the Indus valley inhabitants, they were not the last one because this pattern was followed by the Persians as well where the king was subject to the high priests supports for his coronation³³ {Mazdaism}

Brahmin brought a change in the social and cultural life of the people of Indus civilization it is clear that these civilizations were much advanced in their life which is evident from the archaeological ruins of the twin civilizations of Mohenjo-Daro and Harappa the worshipping of the horse the bathing system the sanitation system all indicates their growth of the social pattern. The evolution of caste system took place either with the advent of these Aryans or it

³⁰ Ibid p-452-458 and also the map. Also see History of Asia Volume 1 ,woodrige ,p-125

³¹ India a History, John Keay, {Grover Press, New York,2000,}p-32 also see Nehru p-96

³² *The Mahabharata of Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa Translated into English Prose Adi Parva*, Author: Kisari Mohan Ganguli, Release Date: April, 2005 [EBook #7864] pp5-7.

³³ History of Asia,vol,I,pp-65-69

could be in place before that is also not clear, however with the passage of time there emerged four clear classes in the society the Brahmin or the religious teachers occupied the upper hierarchy along with the Kshatriyas the rulers, Vaishyas the farmers and traders the shudras or the lowest echelon of the society. The life pattern at that time was more or less similar to the life pattern that remained in vogue till seventeenth century in India or at other parts of the world, there was a class of people who performed the so called dirty work of disposing the human and animal waste and it were these which became the untouchables. The history of world as transferred to us have covered almost every segment of the life yet the act of human waste disposal has remained in obscurity who and where it was disposed is an enigma but it is understood that it was an act which remained unavoidable since the birth of humanity ,the animals are free in this aspect they can pass on their waste without any social taboo but what were the human pattern is not understood so far, did humans also acted the way the animals do ,logically at some point in history the humans considered it as an act that has to performed in privacy or away from the habitats. In the rural villages of Sindh and Punjab as late as 1989 and in certain cases still in parts of the Baluchistan and even in the vicinity of these two cradles of civilization the women perform act of nature collectively at night when they go out of the village and sit together in fields chatting and defecating ,in some civilization the body is then cleaned with stones, mud ,leaves or water unfortunately the Vedas are silent on this aspect but probably the people who were associated with the cleaning of these excrements were placed in the untouchables category, this is how the human castes evolved. Another interesting case is the use of the cow dung for burning at what time in our history it evolved is again not very clear to us and were only the low caste performed these acts or it was acceptable in high castes is again shrouded in mystery. In the same area of civilization the women folk of high castes do perform this work of converting animal feces into the cakes used for burning. The whole point of discussion is to highlight that even today we are not clear on the basic acts of our race. This caste system was not restricted to the Aryans but in the code of Hammurabi the distinction is drawn between the gentlemen the poor and the slave³⁴ similarly the Hittite law also sharply distinguishes between the free man and a slave. This caste system was not restricted to the Aryans but in the code of Hammurabi the distinction is drawn between the gentlemen the poor and the slave³⁵ similarly the Hittite law also sharply distinguishes between the free man and a slave. the caste system was fully incorporated with four castes the katriya and raj Anya at the top these warriors families acknowledged a chief as their raja, the katriya acted as the ritual authority of the caste also the non katriya were called Brahmin and were taken as the parallel authority on the religion , it is very much possible that there existed two religions in the India at that time one which was preached and followed by the natives or the Dravidians and the other of the Aryans and thee is also a possibility when one takes a look at the modern religions and see how they have expanded into the sects thus the probability of having sects within the Aryan race cannot be ruled out., to these two races were added another which performed the agriculturist duties of crop and feeding the entire race they were called Vaisya they were also considered of the Aryan stock and thus 'dvija' twice born. And then there were Sudra the slaves. 'Brahmin was

³⁴ History of Mankind,p-476

³⁵ History of Mankind,p-476

his mouth, rajanya was his arms, his thighs became Vaisya and from his feet Sudra was produced'³⁶.

Brahmin were no different from the high priests of the Egypt and Chaldea and neither there conduct is any different from them, despite lack of any positivist evidence of how they developed the society into four varnas or the castes the logi dictates basing upon the evidence of tablets and old scripture found on the other civilisations that these riparian cultures had something in common due to lack of grandeur and size of Indus Valley it seems more logical that it was influenced by the other two, probably Aryans brought this society with them from the distant land.

Dravidians had their own gods about which nothing can be written with certainty but the Aryans gods were distinct and have a striking similarity with the deities of the other two civilisations, Moenjodaro lived from 3500-2700 BC and it died a death probably due to the nature when Indus changed its course or buried it under silt, from where these Dravidians came no one is sure

Jainism & Buddhism

It is quite logical to perceive that this kind of Brahminic system was bound to be challenged as it creates divisions among the humans and as such the first challenge that came was rather philosophical in nature rather than violent, Vardhamana later called Mahavira {599-527 B.C.,} was son of a kshatriya who had close relation with the royal family of Magadha the very first kingdom of the India founded on the banks of the Ganges, by this period the Aryans had been assimilated in the life of a settler they now live in cities which became small kingdoms spread all over the India but primarily they remained in the upper India and probably maintained a distance with the Dravidian societies of the South also the weather and close proximity of mountains could be another factor, Meghadha was one such kingdom.

Mahavira was married and had children and living a normal life when he set on a journey of over twelve years among the forests and mountains and contemplated and finally attained enlightenment at the age of 42 and for next 30 years he preached all over India his ideals and theory and he did in defiance to the established aristocracy of the Brahmins who were preaching in the Sanskrit but the common language was Prakrit and Mahavira did in the common language, his 'five vows' were poverty, honesty, chastity, truth and respect for life; even for the life that exists in the animals, to practice Ahimsa the non violence against all living beings. Equality of the classes being the fundamental of his theory. Jains or Jainism as it is known took an extreme view of Mahavira's teaching to the extent that they avoid cooking their food on a fire, they fast for long duration and religious suicides are allowed, they move with a veil in order not to swallow the germs, they would clear the path before moving in order to prevent the loss of ants, one sect among them does not wear clothes whereas the other wears. It is an extreme.

³⁶ Ibid, p-54, the term used for caste in the Vedas is color the color associated with four castes as per Mahabharata were white, Red, Yellow and Black

In the same time period son was born to Suddhodana king of Magadha, he named his son as Sakyamuni Gautama born at Kapila he was popularly known as Siddhartha and today is famous as Buddha.³⁷ Magadha was one of the leading and rather the most powerful kingdom of the eastern India which existed at that time it comprehends all the Gangetic provinces³⁸. Thus it seems that whereas the area astride the Indus was under the Persian as their province the area further east i.e. the Ganges plains were under the descendants of the Aryans from where a new social system was taking birth in the form of Buddhism.

For twenty seven years his father shielded his son from the cruelty of the world the death the old age sickness and misery one day Siddhartha was able to see it when he went outside his palace 'how could a man of intelligence be heedless here in hour of calamity when once he knows of destruction...for what rational being would stand or sit or lie at ease still less laugh when he knows of old age disease and death'. Buddha was married at the age of nineteen and had a son also,for six years after his first encounter with the dark side of the life he wondered around and mediated and fasted more or less in the pattern of the Mahavira,he finally attained nirvana under a tree but then he gave up all this and in one of his first and most famous sermon in the deer park of Benares he advocated a middle path,the path has eight folds and ten commandments which follow the right thoughts,words,deeds,purity of heart,kindness to all,truthfulness,charity absentinseism from faultfinding and avoidance of hatred. His commandments include not to kill ,steal,avoidance of adultery,not to speak evil no flattering speech,not to be angry and not to take ascetic vows³⁹

Buddha was a revolutionary probably the first socialist of the world he was against the caste and promoted a classless society free of rituals and rites where all were equal and this made the existing establishment his enemy and probably being the king's son saved him from destruction. Buddha died in 543 B.C., and it was not almost 235 years after his death that his teachings were collected and they continued to be collected under the reign of Asoka in 200 B.C., in the year 420-500 C.E. there existed a great Buddhist university at Nalinda. However later the Bhuddism was divided into two main sects one is called Hinayana which doesnot belive in his divinity and neither worship him in the form of images the other Mahayana makes images of Buddha and considered him divine ,it is Mahayana which spreads in China and in India thusb the engravings of Buddha in these areas.

Alexander the Great

There is always a watershed mark in history the very first and till to date most authentic water mark in relation to sub continental past is Alexander The Great who in 326 BC. invaded India, in fact almost all historical inquiries regarding India starts with Alexander the Great for the reason that Indians were poor in recording their history⁴⁰. Much has been written about him and his campaigns by his historians which provides the first hand

³⁷ A Buddhist Reading , Dough Vincent, approved but unpublished Thesis, University of Western Ontario,2007 also see Buddha &His Doctrines, a bibliographical essay, Otto Kistner,{London,Trubnar & Company,1869}

³⁸ Researches into the Physical History of Mankind, James Cowles Prichard, Third Edition, Volume IV, [London 1844] p 113.

³⁹ History of asia,volume I ,Pp-143-145

⁴⁰ Nehru,p-92.

knowledge about the social life pattern of the time, unfortunately almost all the original work written by his historians and soldiers was destroyed before it came into lime light and the first account and the one which is regarded as most authentic is the one written by Arrian but it was written in 70 A.D. almost three hundred years after Alexander therefore one is again at loss regarding the primary sources about the Alexander's venture in the Indus valley⁴¹. Histories of Alexander's own contemporaries is not immediately available to us because their work have not been preserved for us but 'they have not been lost altogether ... it is in secondary form and authorities'⁴² The historians which travelled with Alexander and later wrote the account falls into distinct cadres the original court historian Callisthenes of Olynthus who was a pupil and relative of Aristotle was allegedly killed for his being outspoken⁴³, Plutarch wrote the biography of Alexander but Arrian remarked 'many authors have written the about Alexander and how one account differs from other'. There are incidents when Alexander threw the manuscript of history depicting his battle with Porus into river⁴⁴.

Indus Valley was already in knowledge of the Persians⁴⁵ who in fact named River Sindhu as Hindu because of the Persian language calling S as H it seems that whole of Indus valley was under them. The head of the Indus Valley was at Taxila or Tashkila where the Indus enters the plains from the mountains.. The Tashkila was the most prosperous of all the cities and the revenue from here surpassed all the revenue from other cities, it was the Persian province and so was the lower portion of the Indus valley. According to Herodotus the Indians were the most in number in terms of population in all the world and the tax which they were paying was the largest and most numerous of all the Darius's twenty satrapies, they were paying 360 gold dust talent⁴⁶ where as the Bactrian were paying 360 silver talents and the value of gold was 13th times more than the silver, Sogdians were paying 300 silver talents. Herodotus has many other observations about India, in his observation there existed tribes east of the Indus which had no sense of death or life and were cannibal in nature, within the tribe there were no sick people as when any person fell sick the others will take him to one side and eat him up men will do this to men and women to the women, in another case the person who fell sick will leave the tribe and go to a isolated place and just wait for the death⁴⁷. Darius had no power over these tribes which were probably in the south India, Herodotus also points that there was another tribe which was opposite to the one described above as they ate no animal meat, they sow no corn and eat only vegetables, another tribe which Herodotus points out was living near the city of Caspatyrus in the country of Pactyica

⁴¹ The Lost Histories of Alexander The Great, Lionel Pearson{scholar Press,Chicago,1983},p-1 also see Arrian

⁴² Lionel Pearson,The Lost Histories of Alexander the Great{Scholar press,Chicago,1983},preface. Also see Jhon Keay *India a history*,p-78.

⁴³ Ibid,p-5,9,16

⁴⁴ Lost Histories,p-150.

⁴⁵ Nehru,p-104.also see Pliny *Natural History Book VI*,p-30.

⁴⁶ Herodotus *The History*, translated by George Rawlinson,ed Manuel Komroff,{Tudor,NewYork,1928}, p-182, also see Olaf Caroe, *Pathan 550B.C.-1957 A.D.*{McMillan,NewYork,1965},p-28.

⁴⁷ Ibid, p-183.

these people dwell northward of all the rest of the Indians and follow the same code of life as the Bactrian's, they are the most war like than any other tribe⁴⁸.

Darius & Skylax

At some time in 516 B.C., Darius commissioned Skylax a Greek seaman of Karyandu to explore the course of the River Indus⁴⁹ during which not only the river was explored but the people living astride were also made subject of the Persians⁵⁰ there are no accounts of a battle waged or waged for this dominion purpose but if history is an indicator of future of past then this first colonisation of Indus valley was something which will be followed for another 2500 years in almost the same pattern. The Satapatha Brahman narrates how people of India moved from west to east; the route along the foothills of the mountains the Himalayas was known as Uttarapatha or the northerly route and Dakshinapatha the southerly route⁵¹. The initial Aryan state took its birth in the Uttarapatha {Harappa and close vicinities} which can be roughly transmitted as the modern day Grand Trunk Road which is in existence for last almost two thousand years in different variation but its general orientation is still astride the mountains crossing all the five rivers of the Punjab and that of Indus and Kabul in the west and of Ganges in the east. The great cities of the Aryan were Delhi as Indraprastha, Varanasi as Kashi, and Patna as Pataliputra {in the year 400 B.C.}. The life in India was organized into republics called gana-sangha i.e. government by discussion but these republics were mainly in the north in present day Chitaval area generally known as Daristan or Yaghestan⁵².

When Alexander was knocking on Indus Valley's head in 327⁵³ B.C. Indus Civilisation had no unity other than they all dwell on the banks of River Indus but their valiant stand against Alexander the Great becomes a historical entity that stands valid even today.

Alexander had established a city with his name Alexandria almost 25 miles north east of Kabul and it is from this base that he entered into the present day Pakistan⁵⁴ he had divided his forces into two groups with 30,000⁵⁵ under his personal command, the other group advanced through Khyber Pass under Hephaestion and Perdikkas⁵⁶ where as he personally marched through the indirect route the one which probably led him through present day Kafiristan- Swat-Bajaur {Aspasians-Gurajans- Assaceniens}[present day Gilgit –Baltistan and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa provinces] 'the route which followed the river Choes was

⁴⁸ Ibid, p-184. Also see Micheal Woods, *Story of India, a video*, British Broadcasting Corporations, London, 1998

⁴⁹ Imperial Gazetteer of India, *Provincial series NWFP*, {government of India, Calcutta, 1908} Volume 20, ,p-13

⁵⁰ Peshawar belonged to the Gandharan Satrapy, see Charles Miller *Khyber, British India's North West Frontier, The story of an Imperial Migrane* {McMillan, New York, 1977}, p-xiii-7.

⁵¹ John Keay, *India a History*, {Grover, New York, 2000}, pp, 41-47.

⁵² Olaf Caroe, *Pathan 550 B.C.-1957 A.D.* {McMillan, New York, 1965}, p-26.

⁵³ Alexander the Great sacked Turkey in 334-333 BC, Phoenicians in 333-332, Persepolis in 331-330 and pushed into Arachosia {Afghanistan} & Sogdia {Uzbekistan} in 329-328 BC, he was in vicinity of Kabul in 327 BC.

⁵⁴ For area familiarisation see, Arrian *The Campaigns of Alexander translated by Aubrey de Selincourt* {Penguin, 1971}, p-194, also see *In the footsteps of Alexander the Great a video* hosted by Micheal Woods, 1998.

⁵⁵ Miller, *Imperial Migrane*, pp, -7-10. John Keay gives the figures of 50,000 see *India a history*, p-71.

⁵⁶ Yenne Bill, *Alexander The Great*, {palgrave, McMillan, New York, 2010} pp-134-135

rough and mountainous and the crossing of the river was no easy task⁵⁷ Alexander was wounded in one of the unknown towns in the mountainous area probably in the vicinity of Arigaeum{present day Nawagai} ‘Alexander was wounded by a dart in the battle against Aspasiens’⁵⁸ Ptolemy account for over 40,000 population made prisoner of war and 2,30,000 oxen were taken ;it is likely that he crossed the Indus near present day⁵⁹ Abbottabad and then descended down to the Taxila which is west of present day Islamabad, Taxila has retained its millennium old name till to date.

‘The Greeks which entered India through Khyber Pass were offered resistance by the city of Peucelaotis{ present day Peshawar} resultantly the governor of the city was killed in the battle which took place after a siege of thirty days. Arrian and Curtius have left us accounts of the pro-

*tracted operations that were needed for the subjugation of the Assakenoi. They show clearly that their territory was a large one, extending right away to the Indus. It evidently included, besides the whole of Swat, Buner and the valleys to the north of the latter. These accounts contain details of the places besieged and taken by Alexander; but it had not been possible to fix their position with any assurance so long as by far the greater portion of that extensive area remained inaccessible to antiquarian research. Only for the initial stages of Alexander's march was definite guidance available*⁶⁰

The time which Alexander took in all this from Alexandria to the Taxila is almost four to six weeks by any means he must have started his expedition in and around February because Arrian do mention him waging war in the snow⁶¹ what is strikingly missing is the absence of Nanga Parbat or any other mountain even the famous mountain in Chitral The Safeed Koh{Tirch Mir} is not mention what is mention is a peak of over 12000 feet and other of 7000 feet which lies almost 75 miles north of Attock where Alexander went with his companions for ritual sacrificial but the absence of Nanga Parbat is a very serious issue because it is highly unlikely that such a land mark is missed when Alexander has walked so close to it . Massaga⁶² the capital of Asaciens {the town is not yet identified} ‘Indians offered stout resistance...siege lasted for four days...many Indians were butchered even after surrender...Alexander married the Queen Cleophis of Massaga...Alexander had a son from her.’⁶³ Massaga was the largest town in the Swat which had over 7000 mercenaries from India later many served under Alexander the Great but the massacre at Massaga is a black spot on the heroic structure of Alexander. Same is the case with Ora a town 75 miles north of Attock 7000 feet high the Greek historians⁶⁴ tend to bring in the Greek mythology into the

⁵⁷ Arrian,p-240

⁵⁸ Arrian’s Anabasis and Indica,translated Edward James Chinnock{Chickwick press,1893},p-229.

⁵⁹ Alexander crossed Indus at Ohind 16 miles above Attock,Arrian,p-240.

⁶⁰ Aurel Stein,P-48.

⁶¹ Ibid,p-194

⁶² Curtiss called it Mazagae ,Anabasis p-233.

⁶³ Arrian,p-246.

⁶⁴ The historians which travelled with Alexander and later wrote the account falls into distinct cadres one who likes Indians and other who did not.

Indian history by mentioning the Alexander's visit to rock of Aoronos close to Ora; this rock of Aoronos has a legend that Heradis the son of Zeus himself was unable to capture it had a circumference of 25 miles and height of 8000 feet⁶⁵; account of Arrian also records that Alexander after capturing it descended down from the mountains and proceeding towards the 'Peucelaotis which stood not far from the river'⁶⁶. Few natives were captured who later guided the Greeks in locating the crossing point, there is no account of Alexander crossing of Indus 'I do not know...for there is no contemporary account'⁶⁷. Tashkila {Taxila} was occupied without any resistance rather the city and its ruler Ombhi himself associated with Alexander the probable reason seems to be that being part of the Persian Empire the city considering being a tributary to the Darius now accepted the suzerainty of Alexander the Great thereby avoiding blood shed and saving the economy of the town, that is an educated approach and later one of world's pioneer university was opened at Taxila, it cannot be termed as treason or cowardice but that highlights the metropolitan culture existed then. 700 troops joined Alexander's forces at Taxila, 200 talents of silver, 3000 oxen and over 10,000 sheep were offered for sacrificial purposes and some thirty elephants were also given as gift⁶⁸. The next important milestone was the crossing of river Jhelum the ancient Hydaspes 'Alexander the Great took twelve months in leaving Bactria and crossing of Jhelum'⁶⁹; there is no account of how Alexander spent the time but all of a sudden Greek historians put him at the banks of Hydaspes and a debate is raging today as to locate the spot from where Alexander made his crossing, there is a stone at the 17th hole of River View Golf Course at Jhelum which marks that point, other is a village Jalalpur few miles down stream⁷⁰. The battle of Porus is a cultural heritage of Pakistan as the historians have nothing but praised for the character of Porus 'a man of character he was different from the Persian Darius who fled from the battlefield.. Porus's two sons died in the battle field...he looked majestic after the defeat in his over seven feet tall frame'⁷¹. The query of Alexander 'what shall I do with you' and Porus answer the 'treatment due to a king' are now part of classic dialogue of world heritage. Alexander and Porus became friends to an extent that Alexander took campaigns to suppress the neighbouring tribes {the tribes across Porus boundaries were called Gleuganicae}s on behalf of the Porus, all in all Alexander capture 37 towns after his battle with Porus and the smallest town had the population of 5000 inhabitants⁷². There are another historic events the most important being the establishing of two cities by Alexander one in the name of his horse Bacchipolus who died here and other {Nicaea} to mark the victory. Both these towns are not traceable now. Alexander then move forward towards east in the pursuit of another Porus who unlike his name sake remained a thorn in Alexander's crown and most likely carry out hit and run tactics, the fact that Alexander crossed the

⁶⁵ Sir Aurel Stein *On Alexander the Great's Track to Indus* Personal Narrative of Explorations on The North-West Frontier of India, {London 1929}, p-43.

⁶⁶ Arrian, p-249.

⁶⁷ Ibid, p-264.

⁶⁸ Ibid, p-258.

⁶⁹ Olaf Caore, *Pathan*, p-44.

⁷⁰ Plutarch life, p-94 also see Fuller *The Generalship of Alexander the Great* {Cambridge, 1948}.

⁷¹ Arrian, p-280.

⁷² Ibid, p-283.

Chenab{Acesines} close to the foothills of Himalayas as indicated by the presence of the rocks in the river 'Alexander's men crossed it on boats and floats it is little under two miles wide and very swift, it is formed by large jagged rocks over which the water pours violently with much noise and commotion'⁷³ indicates that Alexander went upcountry from Jhelum onwards, again Greek historians have left a void, Alexander then crossed Ravi{Hydraotes} and camped in the present day Lahore District area & Amritsar District{part of India but it was supposed to be part of Pakistan on transfer of power in 1947} 'two days march from Ravi , Alexander reached the town of Pimpraena'⁷⁴ at the banks of River Beas{Hyphasis} where he was engaged in fierce battles with the hill tribes of Sanga and Catahai who took cover in their hill forts for over three days ,Greek historians have named few of these tribes but there seems to be little doubt that they are the tribes of present day Jammu and adjoining territories inhabitants{most likely Aryan tribes of Sialkot, the city was the seat of power during Saka's rule in India}}. 17000 Indians were killed here as compared to 12000 at River Jhelum.

Alexander cannot fail to take notice of the Kashmir region and the Himalayan mountains running parallel to his eastward path, it seems highly unlikely to his character that that he even failed to send any small force to reconnoitre the origin of the rivers , he himself came up with the theory of linking the Nile with the Indus which was repudiated by his scholars in the field before he put it down in writing for his mother. The ruler of **Kashmir** Abisares although did send his envoys but he despite Alexander's calling did not come to meet him this is the first mentioning of Kashmir in the world history.

' Alexander promptly sent for Abisares adding a threat that should he fail to appear he would soon see the Macedonian army and its commander in chief in an unwelcome spot''⁷⁵ .

It will remain a mystery of the history as to the actual cause of the Alexander's troops mutiny near Lahore ,was it due to the fatigue as written or was it to the incessant casualties being suffered in the hands of the native tribes and warriors but the demoralising effect of constant casualties cannot be over ruled, Alexander did announced his intention to withdraw and as Arrian has put it the only defeat he suffered was in the hands of his own troops 'I observe gentlemen that when I would lead you on a new venture you no longer follow me with your old spirits'⁷⁶. Indo-Gangetic plains were ruled by 'Aggrmes' or 'Xandrames' but the fact remains that all fighting took place in the present day Pakistan frontiers.⁷⁷

The ferocity of the resistance offered to him in the Indus valley do reinforce the theory about the fighting capability and the ability of the Harappa culture but strangely again there is no mention of them in the Greek historians record , what is recorded are very minute details; the number of the boats which Alexander had for his downward journey; over 2000 with 200 elephants,83 oared galley's and 1,20,000 troops. Alexander in his farewell gift to his friend Porus made him the king of the India with over seven nations and having over 2400 towns under his control.

⁷³ Ptolemy son of Lagus wrote it and quoted by Arrian,p-284.

⁷⁴ Arrian,p-286.

⁷⁵ Ibid,p-284

⁷⁶ Alexander the Great speech recorded by Arrian,p-292.

⁷⁷ Ibid,p-5,9,16

Alexander's retreat on the Hydaspas was full of danger many a battles and skirmishes were encountered in the way although he had both banks secured with his infantry marching in some cases ahead of his flotilla and in others following him to avert any surprise from the natives, the local forts which have been termed as the villages were reduced with violence yet the present day city of Multan and its inhabitants Mallians brought a catastrophe on the Alexander personally and over his army as well, Alexander was critically wounded in the citadel of Multan and the casualties which were suffered by the natives between the start of his retreat from Hydaspas till the crossing of Multan are in excess of 80,000 more than suffered by any other place in India or in adjoining Afghanistan and it was not the end Alexander was constantly harassed by the riparian tribes forcing him to get down from his flotilla and pursue them on land with cavalry thus suffering more casualties and causing havoc on the natives yet unable to break their will to fight, that was the finest season of Indus Valley 's history, this continued all along the Indus including the ancient towns of Mohenjo-Daro and Kot Dijio as well as the tribes of Baluchistan. Alexander at more than two places left his troops and lieutenants on the banks to construct towns and harbours . It took ten months of river sailing before he reached Pattalla the present day Hyderabad or Thatta he camped and made two expeditions into the Arabian Sea before settling down to travel all along the coast line towards the west with the help of the guides including his Indian friend Calanus, his fleet sailed in 325 BC ,this land journey must have taken him from the present day Karachi because it seems improbable that Alexander took his army into the hilly terrain adjoining the western boundary of the area around Karachi. He marched in the present day Bela ,Kalat ,Makran{Gedrosia} ,Gwadar area constantly harassed by hostile population, scarcity of water was so acute that Alexander's troops again mutinied for drops of water and later plead guilty and asked for clemency which was given , the monsoon rain also played havoc during which in one instance even the royal camp was washed away along with many women and children ,it should be noted that over 1,00,000 troops and camp followers were with Alexander in this retreat and almost an equal number or less left in the boats through the sea route. Alexander regarded himself lucky and offered many sacrifices en route and at the end because Darius⁷⁸ when he invaded India was able to leave with only seven companions.

Alexander's campaigns in India written by his own countrymen brought forward certain facts which in a way corroborates the early oral history of the India which primarily was the history of the Indus, Alexander's history brought to notice the northern area of the India as well the tribes of 'little account'. The fighting character of the region is martial in nature as dictated by the constant battles offered to Alexander despite very high rate of attrition. It confirms the existence of the martial civilization not only in the ancient town mentioned in Vedas and which were excavated in 20th century but also bring to the fore new town like Multan and Pattalla and adjoining tribes . The failure to locate the majority of the towns mention in the Greek historians account creates serious doubt about the whole campaigns and about the personality of Alexander it self; was he really a fact or a creation of

⁷⁸ Semiramis and Darius kings of Persia had made an invasion of Indus Valley almost 500 BC but Semiramis was lucky to be able to take flight with 20 people and Darius with only seven people ,also see *History of Alexander the Great extant historians & fragments* by Alexander Robinson Junior{Brown University,Rhode Island,1953},p-130.

Greek fantasy only the time will tell. The key factor of blue eyes of the certain races of the India which hitherto has been associating themselves with the Alexander and his conquering armies especially the people of Kafiristan and certain Pathan tribes seems to lack logic in the light of above mentioned evidence, the theory that lost soldiers of Alexander took residence in the mountains that fell in the route of his advance especially the Swat-Dir and Bajour lacks arguments because equal number of soldiers were left in the Indus Valley and along the Indus river it self and more important in the coastal area as well but there the people are even today black in colour and hardly ever any person is found there with blue eyes unless all such persons and their descendants were killed in the subsequent years as a mark of disgust or revenge.

Social life of India

The account of Greek historian in highlighting the social aspect is chiefly derived from observation of two riparian civilisation namely Indus and Ganges ,to Greeks , Indians seems to be highly civilized , dark in colour short in height and slim in frame, there is hardly any mention of the white colour by the Greek historians, there were class systems in India, with Brahmin being held in high esteem and having the liberty to take anything from the market without any payment, this is quite similar to the pattern in the Nile Valley where the priests were offered daily milk and meat , the mode of transport for the nobility was horse and not one but four horses as riding on one horse was quite undistinguished in nature, camels were also use for transport ,elephants were the mode of transport for the king and the rajas, footwear was made of white leather with heavy soles to increase the height of the person, white dress made of cotton and wrapped around the lower and upper part with a head gear was the standard dress code, people tend to spend the hot summer day under the shade of trees with span so wide that ten people could sit under it. Parrots were trained to utter human language,tiger was regarded by the Indians as much more powerful than elephant⁷⁹

Women and all the other population exhibited high virtues, Indians have been depicted as healthy mainly due to their simple diet and absentee from wine, the doctors specialized in every part of the body and disease, the nuisance and hazard of snakes and scorpions was manifold as they were found under every stone and caused painful bleeding from pores and ultimately death ,yet the local doctors with the help of the herbs were able to cure that ,another method of relieving the pain was through singing which was performed by natives all over India,Suttee was practiced . Brahmins took part in the public life and acted as advisors to the king and all of them lead austere life, men used to dye their beard in various colours like red ,green ,white and purple , men also wear jewellery especially earring made of ivory. ‘Men are taller than any other Asiatics most of them being over seven feet or not much less...the finest fighters to be found any where in Asia at that time’.⁸⁰

Indian soldiers were divided into cavalry and foot soldiers, a foot soldier carried a shield in his left hand ,a sword and a bow which was as large as himself ,the arrows sharp and nothing can resist an arrow from an Indian bow⁸¹ the foot soldiers also carry a javelin{ not

⁷⁹ Alexander histories & fragments,p-132,quoted by Nearchus.

⁸⁰ Arrian,p-261.

⁸¹ Lost Histories,p-129

all} their swords were heavy and during striking he will use his both hands for the purpose. The cavalry had the horses which were not saddled and neither had the harness rather they had their own peculiar iron bit, the horsemen would have a small shield.

Aryans or Indus Valley accepted Islam because it was the closest to their culture, social life and beliefs where as the Gangetic Plains civilisation had become Hindu, before embracing Islam the Aryans displayed traits of their manhood culture and respect for women and this has been recorded by the historians. Thus Indus Valley had a notion of superiority over the other eastern riparian cultures and that was exhibited by the almost thousand years of rule of western India over the rest of India, thus creation of Pakistan becomes a logical deduction of the parting of ways by the Indus Civilisation, the separation of East Pakistan into Bangladesh can be seen in the same contest, the Indus Valley inhabitants cannot live with other riparian's on equality or being subservience to them, Brahmaputra Civilisation was more in number but mere numbers cannot subdue Indus Valley inhabitants and this will remain the pattern in sub continent, the moment Jumna-Ganges got hold of nuclear weapons and upset the historical inferiority in same very moment the Indus Valley also conducted nuclear test there by resorting millenniums old superiority. Alexander the Great's expedition in present day Pakistan has thus played a key role in developing our history.

Ashoka

After the retreat of Alexander the upper India came under the Chandra Gupta Maurya in 321 bc who has been quoted by many historians to be present at the the court of Alexander at Taxila alongwith his friend and mentor Chankya Kautalya, the chankya was a Brahmin in the court of Nanda and was reportedly insulted and in retaliation was keen to take the avenger and this brought these two together and their first attempt at creating a rebellion failed however they learned from a boy eating the bread and as such planned their next move in a way that they instead of toppling the empire from centre started from the outside and were succeeded and as such the very first Indian empire of a magnitude was created and more importantly the very first treatise of politics and warfare was written by the mentor who became the vizier or the king maker, this work in Sanskrit was discovered almost two thousand years later in Madras when accidentally the palm leaves were handed over to the chief librarian however the tests reveal that the work is more than the labour and thought of one person but that has been the constant irritant and shortcoming of the Indian history however when the work is treated at par with the other works on india then one at least get a fair idea of the working pattern of the mauryan empire⁸², Chandragupta was succeeded in due time by his grandson Ashoka but before that it is recorded in history that Chandragupta was able to defeat the Greek military governors in a battle which possibly took place either on the banks of the Jhelum or the Indus and with the account of the events it is very much possible that it was a minor affair because Chandragupta did give some elephants as a token of respect to the greek ruler of Bactria[northern Afghanistan] and in return was accepted as the sovereign of the almost whole of Afghanistan including Kandhar, both Indian and Greek also bounded themselves in act of matrimony in which the daughter of the Greek Seleucides was

⁸² Nehru ,p-116

given in marriage to Chandragupta, Alexander had left his viceroys in the India however not much of history is available from them one of the envoy or ambassador was Megasthenes who wrote Indica⁸³ and like the earlier history of Alexander it is full of contradiction, Megasthenes talk of proud bearing possessed by the natives, the dionosos is again highlighted 'made his appearance from the westhead of a large army ...which suffered from heat and retired to the hills'⁸⁴, yet the gold digging ants and the men with eight toes in the feet who ate nothing and drink nothing who have no nostrils but orifices is something which is highly illogical and as such renders the whole history as a matter of fantasy, the biggest omission is that of Naga Parbat and other peaks it seems absolutely out of place and sense that these peaks are over looked in any of the annals of the history writing, probably the Indus was not yet trekked to its mouth which is also illogical in nature but so far there seems to be no concrete evidence of any such venture.

Ashoka enthroned in 260 bc, his greatness and his impact is not only in the vast empire which he created and left, not only in the fact that he seems to be the very first ruler not only of India but of the known world who detested the violence and the misery which the conquest brings in the aftermath, and all this is known to us through his pillars, his edicts his laws and orders which were engraved on the rocks in all corners of his empire and thus he has been able to preserve the history of the India of that unknown period through a medium which is more reliable than the Greek historians account of fantasies and myths. these edicts were first attributed to asokha in 1837⁸⁵, his major edicts are spread and erected in Kandahar, shahbazgarhi near Peshawar, manshehra in the west of india with minor edict at topara, delhi, bhabru, sanchi in the centre to maski in the south, there are fourteen major rock edicts, eight minor rock edicts and inscriptions and seven major pillar edicts, these edicts have preserved the history

On conquering kalinga the beloved of god felt remorse....slaughter, death and deportation of the people is extremely grievous to the beloved of the gods....this inscription of dhamma has been engraved so that any sons or great grand sons ...should not think of gaining new conqueststhey should only consider conquests of dhamma⁸⁶

Over hundred thousand people were reportedly killed in this campaign of Ashoka thus it was the deadliest conflict of the history till that time and as such emperor felt a remorse, he became a Bhuddist and adopted a non violent policy or dharma as the philosophy of his life and government and this policy seems to be the driving force of the India from him onward and India had to pay a heavy price for this, it seems to be the dilemma of humanity that abstain from violence has much more serious repercussions for the society as a whole than having the violence as way of life and this was aptly proved in the coming centuries rather it will not be out of the contest to point out that for over 1500 years the India suffered from this policy which should have been the policy of all humanity but sadly it was not and still is not.

⁸³ Megasthenes Indica fragments translated by

⁸⁴ Ibid.

⁸⁵ Keay history of india .p-88

⁸⁶ Ibid,p-92

Sakas, Khushans & White Huns

The five hundred years after the death of Ashoka has been described by the historians as the 'dark age of India'⁸⁷ 'one of the darkest in the whole range of Indian history'⁸⁸. India after the ashoka plunged into anarchy with a wave of invaders invading in succession and on regular basis from the northern india to be more precise from the north western ,if history is to be taken as a yard stick of the past events and it is believed that it repeats it self than there is little to imagine that these invaders were nothing else but the descendants of the Aryan race which had uprooted the dravidians from the Indus valley and they did the same in these centuries ,these were the people who lived in the high plateaus of the central Asia where they lived in the nomadic style of society but one fact seems to be quite obvious that they did not shared the philosophy of non violence but who knows because our knowledge of them is feeble and we can only assume that they were violent in nature and in this we are not off the mark because if we lack the evidence of their invasion in 1500 B.C., and in the centuries immediately prior and after the birth and death of Christ then our knowledge of their atrocities and love of warfare as shown by the Mongol invasion of the 12th century and the turk slaves invasion of india in the tenth century is a logical explanation for the violence which must have occurred in that era. These people and tribes were the sakas,Khusahan and Parthians. The empire of the ashoka was broken down in the feudatories mainly on the fringes of the empire,Kashmir and Afghanistan which was not yet Afghanistan as it is known to us today but all along the mountains of Himalayas and the kaukasus there were independent lords who with every passing year descended down to the extent that Sakas were fully entrenched in the east of the Indus thus the boundary of Indus as the barrier between the arya varta and the invaders diminished,our knowledge about these invaders is based not on any text or rock edict but on the coins which have been unearthed so far and will be in coming years these.

Sakas ,Parthians and Pahlavas were all inter related to each other,where as Sakas are believed to be coming from the bactria the Parthians are believed to be Persian tribes,their route of invasion are also debatable with scholars citing the either Bolan or Khyber Passes as the likely routes alongwith Kashmir⁸⁹. The invaders were not restricted to the old armies of the Greek and Persia but the Chinese tribes of Yeh-Chi also had their share they were known as Khushanas or Kanishke. They were in power over the north western part of india the present day north Pakistan between from 78 AD onwards till 260 AD, they had Kashmir{Ki-Pin}bactria{Ta-Hia} Kabul{Kao-Fu} and India{Tien-Chu} under their suzerianity, The rising power of the Persian Sassanian under Ardashir led to Kushans downfall ,sassanians were soon in control of the Balkh,Merv and Khorasan.Thus the sassanians were having the rule over Western India including makran and sind,in Punjab

⁸⁷ Ibid,p-101

⁸⁸ History & Culture of the Indian People, Volume 3,Classical Age, Munshi,Majumdar & Pusalker {Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan,Bombay,1954},p-xlii also see Nehru ,p-127

⁸⁹ Foreign influence on Ancient India,K.C.sagar{Northern Book Centre,New Delhi,1992},p-121-122.History of Ancient Iran Volume 3 Part 7, Richard Frye{Ballantine,Colchester,1984}p-178.. Ancient India Social History some interpretations{Orient longman,Hyderabad,1979}p-157

independent feudatories were established by the Kushan chiefs namely shilada ,Shaka and Ghadara clans apart from having seat of power in the Peshawar

The influence of religion on these was profound the only religion which at that time prospered was Bhuddism because it had the royal patronage ,the initial friction which the established Brahmins had towards the equalitarian preaching of the Bhuddha was completely overturned by the Mauryan dynasty in which the founder is reported to have died in the cave and ashoka made it a state religion the similar pattern would be repeated in the Jerusalem almost two centuries later when Christ would be initially hunted and then after almost three years after his crucufication the romans would embrace the religion as the state religion and in return the Jews would be persecuted however for the time being there are no records which shows the persecution of the Brahmins in the India. The first Bhuddist pilgrim or the missionary is reported to have set course for China in year 65A.D.they were monks Dharmaraksa and Kasyapa Maranga and they set the first monastery in China⁹⁰ they followed the route of going to Peshawar- Jalalabad- Bamiyan crossing Kaucanus into Bactria and then through Pamirs round the takla Makan desert across Lop nor a journey of 3000 kilometers or 1600 miles,however these bhuddist monks also adopted a route which primarily took them all along the Indus river to the China after crossing the Karakorum mountains,one cannot pass a judgement with certainty on the time at which these monks went through this route and more so at what time in history they opted to go along the Gilgit River which joins the Indus almost at the mid of the journey from Taxila towards the China .

In all the records of the history evaluated so far the absence of any expedition towards the origin of the Indus has been missing and this vital link cause a doubt on the authenticity of the accounts even when these Bhuddist did went towards the china on this northerly route still there is no mentioning of the Nanga Parbat which is one of the highest peak in the world the omission of such a landmark is puzzling. The engravings of the Bhudda are in the present town of Gilgit and also in the skardu both these towns are over 4000 feet in elevations skardu is well over 5000 feet ,also importantly the sacred rock of the Hunza which lies at the edge of this track on the bank of Gilgit river which however at this point is called by its name is a logical evidence of the Bhuddist presence in the region but when it happened is not certain,the sacred rock of Hunza has been called as the ‘ veritable data bank of ancient kings, cults and passing strangers’ however this is opinion of Keay is not shared by others most notably Colonel Durand who spent five years in the same area while establishing a British Agency in 1892,on the other hand the rock at Skardu is well documented ‘ It is situated at the mouth of a ravine leading upto the Deosai, a great rock thirty feet high by some fifteen feet wide...on the principal face is a figure of the seated Buddha’⁹¹.

Under the **Samudra Gupta** all this was part of his empire,the India historians highlight the fact that it is possible to point to this with an accuracy and fullness of detail rare in ancient history⁹².In the year 400-411 A.D., a Chinese traveller Fa-Hien travelled in India which was being ruled by the Chandra Gupta II, {no relation with the Chandra Gupta of

⁹⁰ India,Keay,p-112-114.

⁹¹ Making of Frontiers .Colonel Durand,p-128

⁹² , India, Majumdar, p-12

mauraya dynasty} Gupta was a petty chieftain who acquired and then expanded an empire which became the biggest since the Chandragupta however this Chandra Gupta II was the son of samudra Gupta. Fa Hien narratives are the first recorded record of any person highlighting the mountainous city of the Skardu{Iskardoo} although I still find it hard to believe that Fa Hien actually went and stayed in Iskardoo for the reason that he has although brought to notice the ‘venomous dragons which when provoke spit venom’ and also the difficult and rugged path he had to follow to reach the Taxila from the Skardoo and enroute he mentions of a rock 10,000 cubits in high along the Indus but still it not convincing enough of his going through the Skardu and then following the Indus all along downstream to the plains and reaching the taxila ,he for the record does not name the Skardu city rather he spoke of six countries which he entered after Khotan⁹³ .{The other notable Chinese travelers which left a record of their sojourn were Hiuen Tsang 630-45 A.D., and ITsing 671-95 A.D.,}

The white Huns who were also a nomadic tribe like the sakas and the Kushanas these Hunas had migrated from their home land of China in two major groups the one headed towards the Volga and other towards the Oxus,the Hunas in the Oxus by fifth century AD were a powerful entity and from their founder attained the name of Ye-Tha,Hepthalites or Ephthalites and the Greek refered to them as White Huns⁹⁴, they were initially repulsed during the time of sakanda Gupta in 460 AD when they were defeated probably near Taxila because they already had the Gandhara under their control,another army of the same Huns had also attacked the Persians and their they were able to kill the king and capture the throne of Persia in 484, there is uncertainty as to whether the defeated Huns went to Iran or the they stayed in India as the previous all defeted armies did so, the conduct of war at that time is shrouded in mystery because the Indian historians do mention of inflicting a crushing defeat yet keeping in mind the philosophy of Dharma it is not beyond reason to believe that the Huns were allowed to retain t a certain area with them in another hypothesis it is very difficult to finish of an army in totality had that been the case it would have been part of the history,the Huns were now fully established at Balkh before they made their next move towards the India; in 510 under their leader Torramana they came down through the Kashmir valley and routed the Indian military near Gwalior which indicates that they had the territory west of Indus under their control already ,Toramanna thus becomes the first of the foreign ruler to have a large indian territory under his control he had United Provinces, Kashmir, Rajputtana and,Punjab and Madhya Pardesh and after the death of torramanna his son Mihirakula ruled not only India but Ceylon and southern India which makes him the most powerful Indian emperor of all time with Sialkot as the capital which is at the base of Kashmir therefore it leads to the deduction that Kashmir became the base of these Huns probably because of the weather and more importantly it kept their rear protected however it was their defeat from the joint Persian and turks in 563-567 on the Oxus which finished their rule in India ,they also suffered a military defeat from the Maukharis of India ,however again keeping the past history as the guidline it is logical to believe that these Huns settled down in the India and the mountainous territory therefore the theory of the blue eyed generations of

⁹³ A Record of Buddhistic Kingdoms the Chinese Monk Fa Hien of his travels in India & Ceylon A.D., 399-414, translated and annotated by james Legge,professor of Chinese in Oxford university{Oxford,1886}pp 21-26.

⁹⁴ . India ,Majumdar,p-34 also see Keay ,p-117-134

life span of almost thirty years⁹⁷ rocked the very foundation of the Judaism which was by that time was an established religion and after having seen its zenith for almost a thousand years was now suffering under the pagan Romans who were ruling the fertile crescent and Egypt , the sacred city of Jews Jerusalem was under them, similar to the religious history of the past the priests established themselves as the cardinal figures in the Judaism , the ceremonies and rituals were elaborate requiring gold ornaments and very strict inspection of the sacrificial animals a reminiscences of the Nile valley rituals, Jesus challenged all these and was accused of blasphemy which in Judaism means death, the Romans were forced to crucify the Jesus when the rabbis of Jews opted to have a criminal Barabbas being pardoned instead of Jesus ,it was the custom of the Romans that they used to free one prisoner every year and this time the Jews condemned Jesus .

Christians later suffered under the Roman Empire and were prosecuted, it was in the reign of Constantine {312-337} that Christianity was accepted as a state religion the edict for religious tolerance was issued in 313.

Muhammad{pbuh 571-632 AD}

was born in Mecca ,in the tribe of Qureish a ruling clan his father died before his birth and he was raised by his relatives, as a young man he travelled for business with the caravans and it was in this that owner of caravans Khadija who was a decade elder to him and who by most accounts seems to be of Jewish origin proposed Muhammad{pbuh} who was 25 years old at that time,it was in his fortieth year that Muhammad{pbuh} received the divine call ;message was not different from the existing Judaism which in reality revolves around oneness of God, Muhammad{pbuh} was persecuted for his preaching and so were his followers whom many migrated to the neighboring Abyssinia where they got sanctuary under a Christian king and when the Qureish demanded the return of these fugitives and argued that these Muslims do not believe in Christ the Muslims refuted the allegation and affirmed their faith in Christ as a prophet of God ,from this point on ward Muslims and Christians enjoyed a healthy and mutual peaceful co-existence⁹⁸. On the other hand the Jews of Medina also came to the rescue of Prophet and his followers and invited him to Medina an adjoining town. Muhammad migrated to Medina in the year 622 and from this date onward the Muslim calendar originates {Hijra or A.H.}Muhammad{Pbuh} had an exciting life in the Medina he was free to preach his religion and also to establish a kind of Islamic republic, with in this period the skirmishes took place between the Muslims and the Meccaiian idolaters, Muslims raided on the caravans of Mecca and thus disrupted their economic life line in retaliation the Meccaiian forces twice attacked Medina ,all in all Muhammad{pbuh} himself lead in as many as thirteen campaigns . The relations with Jews took a worst turn when their conduct and allegiance to the Muslims became dubious the reasons were either economic or the religious differences or a combination of both as eating of camel meat is forbidden in Judaism but Islam does not have any such restriction; Muslims attacked their stronghold of Khaiber⁹⁹ in 628 AD and by religious creed the Jews were declared that they cannot become a friend of a

⁹⁷ "Jesus Christ." *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online Academic Edition*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2012. Web. 01 Mar. 2012. <<http://www.britannica.com/EBchecked/topic/303091/Jesus-Christ>

⁹⁸ Medieval Islam, Gustav Grunebau, p-34, 44,66 & 210

⁹⁹ The Dhimmi ,Jews & Christians, p-47 also see A History of Islamic Societies, Lapidus ,p-24

Muslim although in strict terms it is still lenient as no enmity was declared¹⁰⁰. Muhammad{pbuh} triumphantly returned to his birth place in 630{ Mecca} and with a combination of diplomacy and force he won the hearts and soul of the people ,he forgave all the enemies of his faith who in any case were his kinsmen and before he left on his final eternal abode in 632 he gave a comprehensive sermon in Mecca declaring that all men are equal and none is superior to the other on the basis of their color or caste and what differentiates the men is their conduct. Islam as a religion is based upon Koran the words of God as spoken by the Muhammad{pbuh} ‘you {Muslims} are the best community evolved for the mankind, enjoining what is right and what forbidding what is wrong’,¹⁰¹ {Koran 3.110}

Islam almost in every field is an advanced version of Judaism and Christianity .The laws of Islam does not vary much from the laws of Moses as both detest eating of pig meat idolatry and adultery, whereas the punishment for an adulteress is death in Judaism the same is applicable in Islam, the difference lies in the extremity of the laws whereas in Judaism the King Solomon had seven hundred wives ,Islam restricted it to four however in term of idolatry the reaction of both is same, Christianity does not change much in nature from the Judaism after all the Jesus said ‘ I have not come here to change anythingeverything which was said before even the comma stands as it is’ {Matthew 5:17-19} however the one change that is visible in Christianity as compare to the Judaism is the tolerance of the adulteress women basing upon the Jesus’s reaction to the treatment of Lady Magellan ,Islam and Muslims benefitted both from Judaism and Christianity ,Prophet {Pbuh}was circumcised and every Muslim is circumcised even today although it is not written or given as a law in the Koran yet it is one thing which is common between a Muslim and a Jew basing upon the covenant of Abraham with the God. Thus Muslims had a very good rapport with both Abrahamic religions however the political environment of Medina pitched Muslims against the Jews which resulted in fierce battles between these two and Jews were exterminated from the Muslim world in a social manner, yet they and Christians were allowed more freedom and peace within the Islamic world as compare to what they each allowed the other in historical time span. Islam tolerated these religions as ‘people of book’ and placed them as Dhimmi¹⁰²{ protected} in which they were allowed to carry out their own local affairs ,freedom of worship, collection of taxes for the religious places by agreeing to pay additional tax, this takes birth with earlier Islamic agreements with the Jews and Christians of Arabia and were formally regulated under the Caliph Umar {634-644}, later Zoroastrians also came under this by declaring that they are also people of book, however in later years there were certain restrictions placed on Dhimmi which included that they cannot ride upon noble animal like horse and camel¹⁰³, there was another concept known as ‘Mawali’ which placed non Arab Muslims to be attached with an Arab tribe as clients¹⁰⁴

¹⁰⁰ Oxford encyclopedia of Islam, Volume 2, p-382,

¹⁰¹ Ibid,p-245

¹⁰² The Dhimmi,p-48

¹⁰³ Ibid,p-63

¹⁰⁴ The Cambridge History of Islam, Volume 1, The Central Islamic Lands,edited by P.M. Holt{caambridge, 1970},p-52

Islam{ literally means submission to the God } played a decisive role in the subsequent history of India from its inception to present day , its impact and effects were cardinal shaping the history and future road map of almost every human on this earth, within the context of this research it is vital to have the basic fundamentals of its faith and history before moving forward. Like all other religions it was presented by a human being and originated from the Arabia the land between the Nile and Mesopotamian civilization. It is a historical coincidence that the very first monotheistic religion took its birth in Mesopotamia in the city of Ur when Abraham preached the oneness of the God and more importantly the covenant with God was established which required every male to be circumcised{ Genesis 17:7-8} and this passed in an oral tradition which presently is known as the Genesis¹⁰⁵ {in the beginning} or the Old Testament and the faith is known as Judaism, later Moses became another key figure in the Judaism, this new faith borrowed heavily from the old tradition in the creation of the universe especially the concept of a universal flood in which Noah in an almost identical pattern to the Gilgamesh took relief on a boat along with all kinds of creature, one striking feature of the new faith was its absolute disliking of pig and its meat{Leviticus 11:7-8}, so much that in one incident seven brothers willingly accepted death in front of their mother but did not touch the pig meat and later mother also accepted death by fire yet did not ate pig meat, it just highlights the severity of the faith, the new faith also forbid eating the meat of camel and the fat of goat ,ox and sheep{Leviticus 7: 23-24}.

THE RISE OF ISLAMIC WORLD

is spectacular in every sense, within two decades after the death of the Muhammad{Pbuh} Islamic forces in a two pronged advance captured southern Palestine in 633 under Amr Bin Al Aass and simultaneously they also captured the Mesopotamian frontier under Khalid Bin Waleed in 633, later both forces combined to inflict a decisive defeat on the East romans in the Battle of Ajnadin in 634, Damascus falling in the same year, the final defeat on the Romans was inflicted in the Battle of Yarmuk on 20th August 636¹⁰⁶, similarly the Persians were routed in Battle of Qadisiyah {636/637} Jerusalem was captured in 638, Babylon fell on 9th April 641, Egypt in 642 and last Persians resistance was over come in 642 at Nihavand ‘ victory of victories’¹⁰⁷, in all these battles Muslims suffered only one major setback and that was in the hands of the Persians in 634 which is known as Battle of Bridge. The Persians{Sasanids} under Yazdigird retreated east ward similar to what they did in front of Alexander and in very similar manner Yazdigird was assassinated at the extreme end of his empire seeking the help of Central Asian Turks and his son Firuz later attempted to seek the help of Chinese also in struggle against the invading Muslims and this is how the Muslims reached Central Asia in hunt of Firuz. Nothing parallels the phenomenal spread of islam within decades the two most powerfull empires of Roman and Persians were exterminated from the region ,the Romans lived for another few centuries but Persians were

¹⁰⁵ "Abraham." *Encyclopædia Britannica. Encyclopædia Britannica Online Academic Edition*. Encyclopædia Britannica Inc., 2012. Web. 01 Mar. 2012.

¹⁰⁶ The Muslim World, Part 1, age of Caliphs, Bertold Spuler translated from German by F.R.C. Bagley{Leiden,Brill,1960},p-19

¹⁰⁷ Cambridge History of Islam, p-61

made part of history. But Islam itself by then had been divided into the sectarian issues, the second caliph Umar was assassinated by a Persian slave on the instigation of another Persian¹⁰⁸ on 3rd November 644 he was only fifty three years old, he was followed by Uthman as the third caliph amidst controversy, he was also assassinated while reciting Koran at the age of eighty in June 656, however this time the assassins were not foreigners rather they were Muslims and included the son of former caliph Umar as well allegedly with the tacit support of Ali; during his twelve years of reign he was opposed by Ali who succeeded him as the fourth caliph. Supporters of Uthman and his kinsmen which included Muawiyah already governor of Syria were blunt in reaction and demanded justice which included apprehension of caliph's murderers, Ali's reaction was rather lukewarm and this infuriated Aisha the wife of late Prophet{pbuh} resultantly the two faced each other in the Battle of Camel{656 AD}, Ali was victorious and he with due respect send Aisha back to Medina¹⁰⁹, this was just the tip of ice berg as Muawiyah refused to pay homage to Ali and another battle took place between them at Siffin in 657AD with no clear result, Ali was assassinated in 661AD while he was offering the prayers, the caliphate was now with the Muawiyah as Ali's elder son forfeited his claim to the caliphate and later Yazid son of Muawiyah ascended to caliphate but he was challenged by the second son of Ali, Hussein who marched towards the Kufa with his family and small bands of followers numbering not more than two hundred but they were slaughtered by the Yazid's forces near Karbala in 680 with only women and children escaping the death who were made prisoners; it rocked the Islam at its roots and till do date Islam is divided on the lines of people who believe that caliphate was the right of the Ali and his family and others who deny this, the followers of Ali or the family of prophet as they later came to be addressed as 'Ahle bayt' are known as Shias which literally means followers, party, group, associate, partisans or supporters¹¹⁰. The Umayyad's { Muawiyah dynasty} later hunted the Shias and Ali was cursed from the pulpit of the mosque,

Shias themselves split into factions one sect supporting the surviving family of Hussain which included his son Zayn Al Abidin and others favoring the third son of Ali named Muhammad Ibn Al Hanafiyah who was from another wife and proclaimed him as Mahdi apart from these direct descendants of the Prophet{pbuh} there were others who opposed the rule of Umayyad and these included off springs{Abd Allah Ibn Zubayr} of the companions of the Prophet{pbuh}, family members of Prophet{pbuh} from his uncle Abbas and other known as 'Kharijites', thus a series of civil wars erupted all across the Islamic empire with more brutal fight taking place in Mecca{692} which was sieged and shelled there by damaging the places of worship the man who restored the Umayyad rule{ Abd Al Malik Marwan r 685-705} was Hijab bin Yousaf, in later period one of the dissenting group Karamities were able even to take the very 'Black stone' away from the Mecca and kept it hiding for a quarter of century

¹⁰⁸ Cambridge History, p-67, it is debated whether the slave was Persian or Christian for this see Muslim World 1 Age of Caliphs, p-30

¹⁰⁹ Ibid, p-70

¹¹⁰ Oxford encyclopedia of Islam, Volume -1, p-55

By 750 AD the Umayyad caliphate was exterminated by the family of Prophet{pbuh} known as Abbasids the division among the Islam became complicated in terms of followers of Ali ,who were now believing that Mahdi who died in 700 has not died but rather has gone into occultation or hiding and will appear soon for the justice thus two very fundamental concepts of Shias developed the 'Gaybah' {hiding} and 'Rajah' {return}. One sect of the Shias{Zayd the second son of Zayn Al abidin} accepted the legality of the first two caliphs but refuted the legality of the third¹¹¹ he also asserted that Imam has to physically assert his imamate and , he and his son Yahya were both killed by the Umayyad's, another sect Ismailia emerged named after the son of the sixth imam who had nominated him as the successor but Ismail died in his life and thus his elder brother Musa became imam but one group of followers remained firm in their belief that Ismail is the seventh imam and the third sect believes in the twelve imams and are known as the Ithna Ashariyah ; their faith revolves around the twelve imams starting from Ali but they believe that the twelfth imam Muhammad Al Muntaza who disappeared in 874 AD has not died but has gone into hiding and will appear on the day of judgment{ this imam Mahdi should not be confused with the earlier Mahdi the third son of Ali }

Thus Sunnis believe that religious guidance and authority can be taken from the companions of the Prophet {pbuh} or in the form of Ijma {collective} decision taken by the Ulemas{religious} people and they also legalize the authority of all the four caliphs but deny that Prophet{Pbuh} designated Ali as his successor ; where as the Shias not only insist that Ali was designated as the Caliph but also refute the legality of the third caliph apart from holding the view that caliphate should only belong to the family of the Prophet{Pbuh}¹¹² . In later years the division between these main streams of Islam became wide and by 20th century there was little in common between these two, the shias offer their prayers three times a day where as the sunnis do it five times a day, moreover a shia will place the dust of Kerbela in front same hold true regarding the alms giving which is one of the cardinal faith of the Islam¹¹³

In the context of the sub continental history and especially of Gilgit the history of Ismailia's need more elaboration, they ' nothing is known about the Ismailia from its origin until after the mid-ninth century when the Ismaili's emerged as a secret revolutionary movement...leader claiming to be acting upon behalf of absent imam Muhammad son of Ismael'¹¹⁴ the continuing sects among Islam first resulted in the liquidation of the Umayyad by the Abbasids and only member of that family Abd al Rehman was able to escape and establish an empire in Spain{755-56AD} ,another split between the Shias resulted in Ismailis being able to set up an empire in Egypt known as the Fatimid and further split in the Fatimid resulted in one sect becoming Naziris and the other becoming Druze and Mahditis, the Fatimid empire was over ran by the Saladin .Cairo was established by the Fatimid's

¹¹¹ Ibid,p-58

¹¹² Oxford Islam,Volume-4,p-140

¹¹³ Bombay high court reports ,reports decided in the high court of Bombay 1866,Daya Muhammad & others Vs. Muhammad Hussein and others ,p-333 also see gazetteer of Sind by E.W.Aitkin 1817 and 1907 edition ,p-160

¹¹⁴ Oxford, encyclopedia Islam,Volume 2,p-341

Abbasids also were intolerant of the Shia dogma and persecuted them with various level of force ,it was under them that the shrines at Kerbala were destroyed and visits were forbidden , Abbasids later laid the foundation of the Baghdad .

Indus Valley

On the eastern end the situation the conquest of Indus Valley started in 711 AD, when Hijaj Bin Yousaf send his nephew a seventeen year old general Muhammad Bin Qasim in a two pronged advance, Qasim literally followed the footsteps of Alexander's retreating forces for his invasion his one wing advanced through the sea route and the other came overland, Sind was conquered in 711 and later Qasim had to face his fate in which on the words of the Hindu raja's daughters he was put in a sack and transported to Kofa where he died, by 1000 AD the Indus Valley up till Multan was under the Muslim rule and a vast majority of the natives have embraced Islam ,the reason for conversion was rather simple as Muslims unlike all other predecessors gave three choices to the conquered population which included embracing of Islam and becoming a member of the society on equal terms ,accepting the status of Dhimmi by paying additional tax or to accept the fight. The faith of the people by the end of the millennium was leaning more towards the Shias' in the Indus valley

Conquest of Central Asia

The very first Islamic army had knocked on the doors of the Central Asia when they were in the hunt of the Firuz the emperor of Persia , Muslims had settled at Merv by 646. Qutaibah ibn Muslim was the governor of Khurasan the north eastern part of Persia who between 710-715 conquered the Central Asia especially the Bactria and Ferghana Valley the heart land of the Turks , these Turks were nomadic tribes originating from the Mongolian steppes and one the tribe Ye Hu was able to establish himself in the Jaxarates {Amu Drya} area, Turk was the name given by Arabs to all nomadic tribes of Central Asia thus it does not represent any particular ethnic tribe¹¹⁵ there is not much of difference in calling them as Aryans as well. Kabul came under Muslim control in 655 AD from the infidels but went out of the Islamic sphere in 700 AD. In 751AD a decisive battle between the Muslims and the Turks who also had the support of the Chinese army in which not only the Turks were defeated but it also put an end to the Chinese rule in the area for another thousand years. Resultantly almost all Turk tribes accepted Islam.

Ghazna was taken over by the Islamic army in 870 AD. Turks established the first Islamic dynasty in Central Asia under the name of Samanids, from these Samanid Turks emerged the Ghazna Turks which shaped the destiny of the India for another five hundred years.

Image Breakers ' Bhut Shikan'

The founder of the dynasty was Sebuktegin {r 977-997} a Turk slave who rose to distinction and it was he who like earlier Aryans claimed his territory to the natural boundary

¹¹⁵ The Muslim World, Age of Caliphates, p-37

of Indus , This frontier including Kabul were under Hindu Shahi kingdoms first invaded India and defeated the Hindu Shahis { 989 & in 991} who gave tribute to Ghazna after his death his son Mahmood of Ghazna continued the conquest{ 1000-1030}, the striking aspect of the successive humiliation of the Hindu states year after takes the art of warfare to new heights, it is amazing to draw a conclusion with the character of the Hindustani militant reaction to the Alexander The Great which finally worn the will power of his Macedonian soldiers, the psychological impact on the over all population must have been devastating as it created a myth of geographical superiority between the plain dwellers of Punjab , Sind, Deccan, and Ganges Valley who were ruthlessly being subdued by the mountainous people , the nomadic tribes and Turks were after nothing else but nomads, wealth taken at will from the Hindu temples help him create the Ghazna culture which became the symbol of the Turkish people, on the historic note it was the culmination point of the Aryans who almost 2000 years ago humiliated the Dravidians, this time they built Ghazna seat of first Islamic Kkingdom of Hindustan, notable historian Al Berouni was able to write down the history of the regime and the social life pattern of the India. India in practical term was just a vassal state of Ghazna. As its very capital of Harsha empire Kanauj was sacked by him in 1018 in which the rajputs displayed their honor of committing mass Jauhar {suicide} after defeat, in 1024 Mahmoods most severe psycholigal blow came with almost 500 miles deep expedition to the southern Dravidian sacred temple at Somnath ‘ it had 1000 Brahmins,300 barbers and 350 temple prostitutes in constant attendance and its chief idol a huge lingam the phallic symbol of Shiva was washed in water from the sacred Ganges carried over 750 miles....’¹¹⁶ For Hindu nation it was a knock out blow an ultimate of Dravidian culture’s and religious surrender, the destruction of the myth and symbol of Brahminic and Hindu identity was is mental surrender state of mind from which Hindus never recovered right at the end when India was divided on the religious line . Mahmood did not destroyed because it refused to pay the protection fortunes a or they held any thing in hiding but the fact that temple was destroyed because it is against the fundamental faith of Islam, thus Muslims developed an inherent superiority over the natives

Ghazna for next two hundred years remained the power centre initially it was captured by the Khwarizms in 1215 later Mongol in 1221 occupied it, came back under Turk control in 1224 and Saifuddin became its governor who also incorporated Karman {Kurram} and Banian{Bannu}. In 1239 Mongols came again and Saif fled from Ghazna but kept his hold on Banian, later Tamerlane invaded India in 1398 and he opted the Banian - Tochi route for his way back. All these invaders who either entered or departed through Waziristan{ Kurram – Shaktu – Tochi – Gomul river valleys } were strongly opposed by the Wazirs ; especially the Mongols. One reason for this opposition was the fact that Mongols were non Muslims and others were attacked for passing through the territory. From 1206-1526 A.D. India or more specifically all the three riparian civilizations { Indus – Ganges – Brahmaputra} were under the control of Muslims who were chiefly Turks, Afghans and Pathans later this was overthrown by the Moghuls who descended down from Central Asia.

¹¹⁶ A History of Asia Volume 1, Formation of Civilisations from Antiquity to 1600. Woodbridge,Hilary & Frank { Allyn,Boston,1964},p-208

The rule of Delhi Sultanate¹¹⁷ is divided into following dynasties. Mamluks 1206-1290 A.D. Khiljis 1290 – 1320 A.D. Tughluqs 1320 – 1414 A.D. The sayyids 1414 -1451 A.D. and Lodhis 1451 – 1526 A.D.

Mamluks 1206 – 1290 A.D.

Shihab ud din Ghorī had no male heir, he had appointed three governors in occupied India, Qutub Ud Din Aibak was given the rule of Jumna/ Ganga Valley, Nasir al Din Qabachah was made the governor of lower Indus valley and Taj al Din Yaldiz was given the helm of affairs of Karman and Sankuran. Aibak was made governor of Delhi in 1192 A.D. with instructions to made conquest further east¹¹⁸. All these Turk governors were related to each other through intermarriages which took place on the command of Shihab Ud Din Ghorī. Aibak was married to the daughter of Yaldiz similarly another daughter of Yaldiz was married to Qubachah apparently Shihab Ghorī had the idea of creating peace among his governors through these marriages but it did not worked the way he had thought as soon after his death the civil war broke out among these chieftains for the control of the power. Yaldiz occupied Ghazna, Aibak declared himself sovereign in Ganga and so was Qabachah in Sind or lower Indus. Aibak was regarded very high by the late Shihab Ghorī and his rank was raised

The bloodline of this empire were the Afghans and Turks Muslims which formed the fighting backbone of the military and ruling junta. The invasion of Tamerlane in 1399 and before him the Mongols in 12th century both originating from the Central Asia once again engraved the racial superiority of the mountain dwellers since Tamerlane had specifically targeted the Hindu population thus the religious supremacy of Islam over the non believers remained intact. Mughul Empire was established by Babur of Ferghana in 1526 after crushing the Muslim Sultan of Delhi, {Sultan Lodhi was an Afghan} Mughul empire later not only protected the native population from the raids of mountain tribes of Afghanistan but also adopted a more liberal approach towards the non believers with varying degree of freedom.

HISTORY OF MUGHUL KINGS AS NARRATED BY THEM

Mughuls ruled India for almost three hundred years in varying capacity, the dynasty was set into motion by Babur of Fergana in 1527 AD followed by his son Humayun and crown remained in direct bloodline till 1857 when the monarchy was abolished by the British East India Company. The dynasty is important from historical perspective as almost all the emperors left behind their autobiographies and one odd exception that of Akbar the Great is overcome by his court historian's histories.

Mughuls are Aryans, they belong to Turk ethnic group, and they were settled in the Central Asia or more precisely Eastern Turkestan which comprised of Samarkand, Bukhara, Fergana, Tashkent, Kashgī cities. They were in area between River Oxus {Amu Darya} and

¹¹⁷ The rulers who ruled India before the Moghuls have been termed as Delhi Sultans and the empire is termed as Delhi Sultanate.

¹¹⁸ Agha Hussain Hamdani *The Frontier Policy of The Delhi Sultans*, Pakistan National Institute of Historical & Cultural Research {Islamabad,1986}.p-39.

River Jaxarates{Sur Darya}. They are the natives of the Western Hindukush and only Wakhan strip separates them from Chitral, Hunza, Gilgit onwards to River Indus. Mughuls can be classified as one of the Aryan tribes the last one to migrate from the highlands towards the green pastures of Indus Valley. Geography plays key role in the classification and grouping of people and tribes. Language, customs, ritual and above all religion binds them together. Mughuls or eastern Turks embraced Islam in a gradual manner. After the initial battles with Arabs the area remained under their jurisdiction before Genghiz Khan brought the downfall with a revolution in military affairs; the world's first blitzkrieg. Under his reign all Muslim Turks became his subservient and joined his army. Tamerlane's grand father had a convention engraved in iron under which the ruler would always be from the family of Gheniz Kahn and command of army to be with Turks more specifically Tamerlane's family. Great Khan 'Temujin' had divided his empire which at time comprised of China, Central Asia, Middle East, Afghanistan among his three sons. Present day Afghanistan, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Uzbekistan, were all part of Chagtai Khanate. It is this very khanate which has been affecting the history most, even at present and in recent history the most volatile region in world is this Chagtai Khanate.

The whole Chagtai Khanate was Muslim by faith following Hanfaai & Malaki sect, which is more liberal in interpretation of Islamic laws for instance almost all Mughul emperors were fond of liquor yet detested pig meat on religious grounds and even in dire hunger never took it, Babur was bi sexual in orientation¹¹⁹. They would pray and give alms, keeps fast in the holy month of Ramadan and sacrifice lambs in Zi ul haj month. Family life was important to them and they seldom left their wives for long, always respectful of in laws. They were gentlemen in nature, adhering and following a code of warfare based upon the Temujin's Code and that of Prophet Muhammad {pbuh} directives. One of the fundamental aspect of Islamic warfare is deception 'War is nothing but deception' and Timurids followed it by spirit. Assassination was a common method to remove the leader by any means; poison was most favoured method. Battles were fierce and had to be fought with a character; the life of the vanquished depends upon his conduct in the battle he had recently lost. The looser had to put the grass in his mouth to show his surrender. Courtesies were immense, a khan or mirza would greet the equivalent by receiving him almost two miles ahead of his camp. Nine to twenty five were the numbers of the greetings done by touching own thighs in front of khan and then stepping back. Headgear was important and none was seen without it, khans would send the caps as mark of respect and gift to fellow family members. Food was in shape of meat and fruits. Villages established on relatively high ground, in the form of forts having a canals running through it in most of cases or erected close to water source. Revenue was limited but it was there, taxes were imposed on the cities and towns. Pay to soldiers remained centred around the loot. These Turks were generous, they had the custom of giving away most precious gifts on hearing good news especially birth of their sons from messengers while in battlefield.¹²⁰

¹¹⁹ *Tuzk i Babri*, autobiography of Emperor Babur, translated from Persian into Urdu & English. Babur admits himself of falling in love with a boy in his youth; it seems normal then., p-9.

¹²⁰ *Darbar I Akbari*, history of Akbar the Great translated from Persian by Moulana Muhammad Azad, First edition 1910.p-6.

AMIR TAIMOUR - TAMERLANE,1336-1405 AD.

Dynasty traces its bloodline to Amir Tamerlane who was born in Samarkand, he practically destroyed India in 1399 when he invaded it. India at that time was ruled by the Muslim dynasty of slave kings belonging to Ghazna. Tamerlane believed that nine out of ten issues confronting a state can be resolved through deliberations and consultations the tenth issue requires a sword for resolve. Tamerlane's rise to power is phenomenon because he set on his history making course with only 243 men¹²¹. Tamerlane himself admits that he went through lot of deliberations before undertaking any expedition , notably he would reject any issue which had two prong danger and preferring the one with lone danger. He would only listen to advice which he believed was based upon sincerity; rejecting anything which may cause demoralising of his army. Another key characteristic of his life was his believe and faith in religion, he would consult the Holy Koran before undertaking any important task . He did so when Tughluq Taimour summoned him for expedition to Khorasan.

In a strange twist of fate coupled with the wisdom, real politick, and craftsmanship Tamerlane turned the tables on his would be conqueror. He bribed the invading chiefs to just give him enough time to meet Tughlaq Taimour; he met him and won him over by having the royal charter of kingship of Maraw Ul Nihar in his name. The waiting chiefs revolted against the Tughlaq on learning this . Later Tughluq nullified his earlier charter and appointed his own son Ilyas Baig as the ruler of Marwa Ul Nihar. This is which put Tamerlane on run for another two years. Running from mountains to deserts to valleys. He was soon left with seven followers out of which three did not had the horses thus one night they simply stole the horses and deserted Tamerlane. This was not the end of his troubles because after two days he was attacked by a local robber baron that captured Tamerlane and put him in a dungeon. After two full moon , Tamerlane finally got the opportunity to grab the guard's sword and killed him, he now ran after his captor and got him in one corner like a act. In the end Tamerlane did forgive him in lieu for money and horses. It was in events that occurred after this but related to this phase of Tamerlane's life that he was wounded in one of the skirmish with an arrow in his shoulder and in his feet . Tamerlane at this phase of life aligned himself very closely with the religion. He would pray all night and would often sleep after Fajr prayers. It was on one such occasion that he was offering the prayers when a troop of soldiers trottingly appeared . 'What are you looking for'? inquired Taimour as he steeped up from his prayer mat along with other few men of his. We are looking for the camp of Amir Taimour , replied the soldier still sitting on the horse , do you know where is it ? he inquired. Taimour after ascertaining about the intention agreed to take them to the camp of Amir Taimour while still hiding his identity. End of the day , Taimour had been recognised by his old servants and fellow men, he was installed as the Amir of the rebel army which numbered now around four thousand ; this was the turning point in history as from here onwards it was the rise of Tamerlane. He eventually confronted Ilyas Baig who was also in his hunt and in a masterpiece of military tactics nullified Ilyas's numerical superiority by taking up position on high ground and later bleed to death his enemy through nebulous skirmishes; Ilyas Baig was

¹²¹ *Tuzk-i-Taimouri*, Autobiography of Tamerlane translated from Persian by Syed Abu al Hashim Nadvi {Sange Meel publishers, Lahore, 2012}p,21.

finally killed by his faction and Tamerlane now had the Marva Ul Nihar under his sovereignty.

Tamerlane was a philosopher king of traditional class, the type which Aristotle had advocated. What separates Tamerlane from Alexander the Great was in the fact that where as Alexander was bachelor, Tamerlane was married and as such the role of in laws became more prominent in Tamerlane's life. Amir Hussain was his brother in law who caused maximum heartburn; 'I gave him the provinces of Balkh and Khorasan to please my wife...I respected my relationship with him..he was jealous of my rise to power', notes Tamerlane. The initial year of establishing his writ on the state he now rules is a masterpiece of politics; he seldom used violence rather it was the charm, charisma, love, affection, courtesies which won him his would be mutineers. Tamerlane pondered a lot over his strategy and realised that war is not the solution to end all his domestic issues for the reason that end result of any battle cannot be predicted before hand. 'I decided to be fair with everyone, thus i distributed all the captured wealth among my troops...I granted provinces to all leading khans...appointments to all powerful men'. Yet Tamerlane had one simple philosophy in running of a country, that there can be only one king in it and rest all have to be subservient to him. Some of early acts of him are in this connection when he realised that he have to take action sooner or later end result was a consolidation of his rule. These early feats of Tamerlane are more famous for the presence of mind, endurance, personal valour and leadership, planning and calculated risks rather than pure violence which later became his trademark. Night ambush was his favourite tactics, brining and coaxing the enemy into narrow defiles and then attacking with sharpshooters was another. It is another historical coincidence that Nicolai Machiavelli the famous Italian political thinker wrote his Prince and Art of War soon after this period; it seems that Tamerlane was the role model of Prince.

With the death of Tamerlane {1410AD} the 300 years cycle of violence erupting from Central Asia seems to at its lowest ebb. The present day Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Turkestan were the theatre around which the cobweb of history was woven, there was no central figure of authority left. Tamerlane had nominated his son as his successor and power and authority remained with the house of Tamerlane. By end 15th Century or third generation; small valley states emerged which were ruled by the Tamerlane blood line in varying off shoots, intermarriages among them by tradition had ensured that formal courtesies will be adhered irrespective of outcome on battle field. Ladies were especially royal family remained unharmed. Rape and loot was the main attraction of a campaign, rape was less because the women could easily be turned into a slave girl. Food was scarce but fruit and animals in abundance there by maintaining a healthy balance diet. Horse was the key to success in every aspect of life, military was non existent in the form of a regular army rather a band of followers followed the Tamerlane's successors. In such background, in a small valley of Fergana, which is situated astride Amu Darya. It was narrow and had seven towns with satellite villages mostly on high grounds. Fruit was the main production and life pleasant. On the east Kashgir, on the west Samarkand, in the south Badakshan and in north the wild jungles belonging to Persians formed the boundaries of Fergana. Tamerlane had remarked that it was not enough to keep even half a dosen soldiers on permanent revenue.

BABUR OF FERGANA. 1483-1530.

Babur's father Sheikh Omar was the ruler of Fergana and mindful of his area he made many ventures to capture adjoining areas who were ruled by his blood brothers, at one time he had Tashkent under his sovereignty. The art of warfare revolved around creating alliances which naturally meant more manpower, however in lieu Sheikh Omar had to give away many of his territories as payment. This custom remained in vogue for many centuries to come. Sheikh Omar was son of abu Saeed Mirza who was son of Sultan Muhammad Mirza, son of MiranShah { the famous town of MiranShah in North Waziristan} who was one among many sons of Great Tamerlane¹²².

HUMAYUN 1508-1556.

Humayun almost had a copycat life of his father Babur and that of Tamerlane. He lost his inherited, newly established kingdom in India to his half brother Kamran and military commander Pathan Sher Shah Suri who as a military governor revolted and Humayun had to conduct a retrograde operation which practically pushed him back into the south western desert of Indus in Sind. Humayun had only Delhi with him where as Kamran had revolted with Kabul and Lahore behind him, Sher Shah Suri was moving westward from Bengal in the east. Sandwiched between these two, Humayun squeezed out towards the south; the ancient Pattala of Alexander. Almost hundred miles east of River Indus is the ancient mud fort oasis of Umarkot. It was here that his son Akbar was born, a small cemented plaque between the Chhor army airstrip and the bazaar of Umarkot marks the spot where Akbar was born. Humayun was so penniless at the moment that he was unable even to celebrate the birth of his son.

Humayun crossed Indus and marched through the desert of death with his seventy odd followers including his newly born son and his beloved wife. The same very route was adopted by the British troops during the First Anglo Afghan War of 1839 with disastrous results; monuments still mark the graves of many who died while marching through this waterless, barren, hot, dry piece of land. Humayun was able to make it to Sibi almost two hundred miles west. Crossed Bolan Pass and following the present day route reached Kandahar. It is an epic escape, a classic by any standard; hats off to the ladies for withstanding all this torment. There was no army in hunt for Humayun but he was not welcomed by any, his half brother was in control of Kabul with Kandahar also in the orbit. Persian also had their influence stretching to present day Herat and Kandahar. It is worth highlighting that Humayun had a torrent love affair with his wife and seldom both were seen separate but now the turn of after took them to the Kandahar. Humayun finally agreed to the advice of Bairam Khan his former military commander and close, loyal adviser to seek asylum in Persia and wait for the best. Humayun had the option of riding back to his father's home valley and seek help from his relatives. In the end Akbar was left alone with the

¹²² Tuzk I Babri, Emperor Babur's autobiography, translated from Persian into urdu. Sange Meel publications 1985.

servants and his parents set off towards Iran. The other side of history is that Akbar was left as hostage with the half brother and relatives of Humayun.

Humayun later came to India via Afghanistan , he captured Kabul in 956Hijra and

AKBAR THE GREAT 1542-1605.

Afghanistan

It was not a country at that era{ 1000 – 1700 A.D; in the same sense as one talks of Persia of that time. The word Afghan appeared for the first time during the reign of Mahmood of Ghazna it depicted the area between the Ghazna & Sulaiman Koh territory¹²³ it is a Persian word for the people inhabiting east of Ghazna. On the other hand people of Indus Valley considers themselves as ‘ the one who lives out side the western frontiers of Indus Valley’. Traditionally the Pathans considers themselves to be one of the lost tribe of the Moses for the reason that it gives them a lineage to the Abrahamic religion rather than to be termed as any thing else. The Pathan tradition highlights that they are one of the early converts of Islam, one of their tribal leader was called by the most famous of all the Muslim and Arab General Khalid Bin Waleed to the Mecca and there they embraced Islam, the one logic which the Pathans gives in support; the fact that they have the same name of their pass the Khyber which is also the name of another important place in the Arab and early Islamic history ‘The Khyber’ of the Jews. Just like the word ‘Turk’, the word ‘Afghan’ also is complicated in nature. It is safe to assume that Pathan, Afghan & Turk are nomadic tribes inter linked with marriages, blood lines & Islam yet retaining fundamental, animalistic, natural and historical grievances and vengeance against each other.

Nadir Shah {d 1747}a Persian Turk in 1738 , conducted the last rites of Mughal Empire by capturing Kandahar, Ghazna, Kabul and finally in 1739 defeated Emperor Muhammad Shah, ravaged Delhi for days and nights, leaving it with nothing left on the body, taking away Koh-i –Noor Diamond as well . Nadir laid the foundation of Afghanistan, his empire was as glorious and powerful as the Mughul Empire at its peak. This was the rise of Persia or the Western Muslim Aryans. Ahmed Shah Abdali {d 1772} is regarded as the father of modern day Afghanistan, as a country his rule extended beyond Indus in the east and Delhi became a vassal state. Above all he emerged as the real emperor of modern day India, Pakistan and Afghanistan by virtue of his crushing defeat of Marathas in 1761 at Panipat . Lahore, Kashmir, Multan, Peshawar all became part of Afghanistan; which now emerged as a saviour of Islam

Sikh Empire {1799-1846}

Sikhism took birth in Punjab in 1520 AD and despite having Muslim sufi saints teachings as part of their religion they were prosecuted ruthlessly by the Aurangzeb and as

¹²³ *Imperial Gazetteer of India Provincial series NWFP {Calcutta,1908}p*

such when the Abdalli's forces were marching back to the mountain retreat they were attacked by the Sikh bands. In 1799 the Sikhs finally captured Lahore and within years had the Kashmir, Multan and Peshawar under their control, for the first time in a thousand years the martial supremacy of the mountain dwellers of Hindu Kush was broken by the native dwellers of plains of India.

Sikhs did not had an easy and comprehensive control over the territory and people living on the Western bank of River Indus yet through a blend of diplomacy and militancy Ranjeet was able to have his forces in Peshawar¹²⁴ and for a short time had the control over the Khyber Pass as well. The Kabul and Lahore thus remained embroiled in a constant war of attrition. The tribes inhabiting the mountainous region remained independent and owed no allegiance to any ruler however the religious and ethnic commonality bounded them together against Sikhs furthermore the tribes internal feuds were such that they were erratic and unpredictable in their conduct, looting, levying of taxes on trade and forces passing through their area of influence were the cornerstone of their economy. Ranjeet Singh had kept the Kashmir under the Dogra rulers in a semi autonomous state. Kashmir at that time had no well defined boundary in the North ,West and East. Dogras expanded the frontiers of Kashmir in these three directions and were able to capture the Gilgit, Skardu, Laddakh and also made in roads into tribal territory of Marghalla and Hazara hills. Ranjeet Singh also staked claims on Eastern Afghanistan¹²⁵.

Sikh religion also took birth in Punjab in the same period and later expanded among the peasantry the Jats. Which in later years remained confined to Punjab and although there is a considerable population of Sikhs in Canada and United Kingdom but these are the immigrants, no Sikh culture expanded into the Indus Civilisation, certain hill tribes of Kashmir most notable the Dogras of Jammu and Sandias of Poonch. During the reign of Jahangir the Sikh guru Arjun Singh¹²⁶ was tortured to death for his alleged support to the Jahangir's rebellious son Khurram was the historical accident as it put the Sikh religion against the Islam. Sikkim was influenced by the Islam in its infancy, the thoughts of Sufi saints Bullay Shah are integral part of granth sahib ,the foundation stone of Golden Temple the Mecca of Sikhs was laid by a Muslim saint Mian Mir, the land being given by Akbar the Great. The acts of Tamerlane, Jahangir and later Aurangzeb had two varying impact on the culture of the empire, a sense of deep insecurity was embossed on the non Muslims especially the Hindus and Sikhs on religious matters, on the other hand the supremacy of Islam and that of their non tolerance of other religions especially the brutality, ruthlessness and a disregard to humanity as displayed by the central Asian blood line rulers also created a superiority aura around the Muslims. Kashmir again displayed a unique sense of peace-loving Muslims living and ruling Hindus and Buddhists, Kashmiri Islamic brand was influenced by the Central Asian Sufi saints, this face of Islam was more tune to the geography of the mountainous region and more accommodative, yet it remained fundamental in nature, both Sunnis and Shias lived and fought on regular basis especially in days of muhaaram, the worst were the riots of 1886 in Srinagar.

¹²⁴ Khullar, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*. {Hem, New Delhi,1980}. pp-48-52, pp 121-129

¹²⁵ Miller, *Khyber*, p xv

¹²⁶ *South Asia Narrative*,p,139

IN 1800 WITH Mughal emperor practically confined to Delhi, and rest of Punjab in a state of anarchy after the Abdalli's ravage of Delhi under the afghan governors at Lahore and Multan, a young Sikh ,Ranjeet Singh captured Lahore and became maharaja and the very first Sikh empire was founded that became a challenge to the Muslims, this Sikh empire that lasted till 1846,six more years then Maharajah Ranjit Singh incorporated, captured, annexed ,subjugated, ruled from Kabul{for a short period}in west ,Gilgit, Laddakh,Srinagar,Jammu in north ,Multan in south and under 1807 treaty with British East Company {the Christians who having arrived in subcontinent in 15th century from Portugal, Spain, England, Netherland and France as traders finally culminated in the superiority of the British soldiery ,firepower and discipline, who by this year were the kingmakers}that limits Singh's eastern boundary and influence till Sutlej. It was in 1820 that Ranjeet Singh was able to conquer the vale of Kashmir and later instead of keeping it under his direct control at Lahore; he rather made Ghulab Singh a Sikh Dogra chieftain of Jammu state. Statesman ship, diplomacy and bravery were the hallmarks of Ranjit Singh's rule and personality, he was handicapped with one eye, a fundamentalist Sikh yet as a ruler he set the very first example and conduct of a Sikh state and how the Hindus and Muslims will be treated in it and this later became a pattern in other Sikh states. Ranjit Singh had Muslim advisers most notable among them the Fakir brothers, Ranjeet was careful with money and instead of bearing the cost of garrisoning he preferred annual tax, he did this with Bahawalpur a desert state and mountainous Kashmir.

RANJIT SINGH in a sense reflects the culture and mind set of a Punjabi who prefers his plain, green fields more than the mountains or desert, Punjabi lived on the land, irrigating it with ever flowing ever present fresh water of Kashmir. Ranjeet Singh did a lot to improve the irrigation system and so were the British who in 1846 were able to annex Punjab after a series of battles that took place at Chillianwala and Sobraon. Later both races, cultures and religions developed a deep trust and mutual respect for each others bravery and martial skills, at this decisive moment of sub continental history neither any Muslim nor any Hindu state came to the rescue of Punjab empire further more even raja Ghulab Singh remained aloof from this war, he was able to negotiate later the purchase of Kashmir Vale from British East India Company for 85 lakh rupees {present day US\$1, 000, 00}.

Ghulab Singh was as brave as Ranjit Singh, he had no other option but to expand and explore towards north, east and west as in south the British had the plains of Punjab. Ghulab Singh's forces majority of them Sikhs but also Muslims as well, captured Laddakh, Gilgit, and ventured into Tibet as well. These were the areas, cultures and civilisations about which very little was known in the west. The European continental rivalry had its effects on the India as well, first it was the threat of Napoleon in 1807 which compelled British East India Company to send diplomats and explorers into Baluchistan and make treaties with Sikhs,¹²⁷ it also resulted in the First Anglo Afghan war as well later the fear of Czars replaced Napoleon and with this shift in paradigm the Kashmir especially its north western borders assume greater urgency and a great game started Kashmir also became the focal point of India's trade with central Asia albeit as an alternative to the much easy and economical route that passes through Khyber or Bolan passes. Kashmir which was ruled by Dillip Singh after Gulab

¹²⁷ Army Publishing House, *Campaigns of The Second Afghan War 1878-80*,pp25-37

Singh and his heirs later buckle under Raj's pressure and British explorers were allowed map the territorial boundaries of the Raj's empire, to station the British resident and in 1895 to have a residency with British officer and Dogra troops at Gilgit. Kashmir and few other states like Hyderabad Deccan, Kalat among over 550 other states that ranged from few kilometres in area to size equal or more than the British isles had varying degree of autonomy depending on the financial and cultural mind set of Viceroy who was all powerful and all princely rulers owe their rule to the Crown.

Sikhism took birth in the eastern tributaries of Indus Valley, thus they are part of it. Muslim teachings and thoughts hugely affected the Sikh thoughts, it was a Muslim saint Mian Mir who laid the foundation stone of Sikhism's most reverend shrine The Golden Temple at Amritsar. Sikhism took birth in Punjab in 1520 A.D; and despite having Muslim Sufi saints teachings as part of their religion they were treated at times harshly by the Mughals notably by the Aurangzeb not purely on religious grounds but it also had the spice of royal politics as well. Ahmad Shah Abdalli's forces on their way back after plundering Delhi were attacked by the Sikh Misls. In 1799 Sikh's under Ranjeet Singh entered into Lahore and slowly but gradually the Afghan Empire started shrinking. In 1834 Sikhs overpowered Afghans at Nowshehra and Peshawar along with Kohat came under their control. It was at Jamrud in 1837 that this tide was checked and with the death of Ranjeet Singh in 1839 the Sikh Empire similar to so many other empires stared at the writing on the wall.¹²⁸

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Sikh empire had a short life but it had a deep impact on the coming events, it was an independent kingdom not subject to King of Delhi or the East India Company, Sikh at their

¹²⁸Khullar, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*. {Hem, New Delhi, 1980}. pp-48-52, pp 121-129

¹²⁹Khullar, *Maharaja Ranjit Singh*. {Hem, New Delhi, 1980}. pp-48-52, pp 121-129

own under some of the most brilliant generals including Hari Singh Nalwa took the Afghans head on and pushed them back. Ranjeet Singh was an able ruler and a shrewd one too, he had European officers as part of his army, he introduced the existing standards of drill and organization in khalsa army. One beauty of his army was its ethnic and religious composition , Muslims, hindoos and Christians all served together. The very first governor of Peshawar was a French who was serving under Ranjeet.

Islamic Renaissance 1761-1849

. Islamic renaissance movements which started with the Shah Waliullah and reached its zenith under Syed Ahmed Shaheed has a profound impact on the history of the area. As we enter into the 21st Century it becomes obvious that the same places still have the same impact and issues also are not much different. Thus it is pertinent to have a brief history of the time. Islam came to subcontinent through the Sind and later central Asian Muslim invaders from Mahmud of Ghazni to Tamerlane and later the moguls made India synonym with Islamic heritage and icon of invincibility. The religion itself had many shades for a starter it adopted a humane and flexible approach towards the non Muslims who were simply kafirs because they did not belong to the people of book. The treatment meted towards the Persians in 640 AD onwards after their capitulation in the hands of Muslims served as a standing operating procedure, Muhammad bin Qasim married the daughter of defeated Hindu raja. Later Qasim had to pay a price in the form of his life when the same bride and her sister complained to the Caliph that Qasim has married both of them simultaneously which is against the Islamic rules. Qasim was reportedly sent back or received at the court tied and bundled inside a sack, he died quickly. There was something more to the causes of his death other than this marriage but it was still the root cause. The Islamic empire which was established by Qasim soon spread along the river bank of Indus as far upward as till Multan. By this time in history the gulf was increasing between the friends of Ali known as shia and clansmen of Muawayya. Multan was a shia kingdom.

The Central Asian Muslims brought down their version of Islam which they have learn from the Arabs who first invaded the central Asia in 651AD. Central Asia or the Turks became the Caliph makers and their cultural heritage revolving round the mountains and horses was absorbed into the desert base tradition of Arab Islam. The Turk brand of Islam soon became popular as Sufism; a more liberal and musical based inspirational meditation. Central Asia had the past trade and commerce ties with India and as such this Islam was the state Islam. British or the Christians arrival change the scenario as these were the people of book and as such different from Kafirs. More so the Islamic history is based upon the fact that the Christians helped Muslims in the early and difficult days of Islam. Akbar the Great was an emperor of extraordinary stature, he was ruling a country with two diversified religions along with numerable sects. Akbar built a hall of debate probably the very first of its nature by any emperor anywhere in the history, Akbar now had the religious debates among the Muslims , Christians and Hindu scholars ,listening to their arguments and counter arguments. In modern day it is similar to the parliament or judicial proceedings. In the end Akbar took the decision to introduce a new official state religion Din Ilahi {religion of god}

in which he combined all the qualities of all the three religions, the important factor was the supreme authority of Akbar himself and the emperors to follow in the matters of religious disputes. At that time there was no concept of secularism anywhere in the world, the crusades is a classical example of the mindset of history of that period followed by thirty years war in Europe.

Mujaddid Alf Sani was the religious opponent who challenged Akbar's writ in this matter, he was a priest without any force of support of any kingdom and he was living in the same city as the emperor. It speaks volume of religious tolerance of mughuls that the emperor's religion had a natural death.

Shah Waliullah 1703-1762.

Qutab Din Ahmed Ibn Abdul Rahim known as Shah Waliullah has the distinction of saving the mogul empire for few more decades and destroying the rise of Hindus for another 180 years when India was given freedom. Shah Waliullah was also a religious thinker and preacher and it was he who invited the Ahmed shah Abdali to come down to India in the name of jihad. Abdali did acme and in the decisive battle of Panipat 1761 he inflicted crushing defeat upon marhattas. Shah Waliullah traces his bloodline to second caliph Umar. He performed his hajj in 1731 where he stayed for over a year, Shah Waliullah belongs to the Naqsbandia sect of Sufism.

Ibn Abdul Wahab 1703-1792, was an Arab scholar and religious reformer , he was at Mecca at the same time when Shah Waliullah was there and attended and received education from the same teacher yet both have not mentioned about each other in their work. Both played decisive role in the future of their respective motherland and on Islam. Ibn Wahab had a political pact with the Saud family of Najd, under which both affirmed to take up Jihad . This pattern was closely followed and applied by Syed Ahmed Bareilvi Shaheed. Fundamentally the key difference between the Ibn Wahab's teaching and the practice of Islam in India was in the fact that in India the saints and their shrines along with their successors were and are still held in high esteem where as no such decorum is practiced in Wahabism also known as ahle Sunnah. Another prominent feature was their non acceptance of Shiaism.

1825-1849

Before the final defeat of Sikhs in the hands of British which resulted in the annexation of Punjab , the period from 1800 onwards is centred around the Mujahedeen movement led by Syed Ahmed Bareilvi Shaheed. This movement has few distinctions, it was led by a non pathan with almost all key leaders belonging to the central India and they settled in the Peshawar valley in 1826 and later moved to the east of Peshawar valley towards the Mardan, Buner, Hazara valleys. They carried out a guerrilla war against the Sikhs and later against the British as well. It was the first movement which came from the east and roused the pathan tribes of Mardan and Peshawar Valley.

Syed Ahmed Barelvi Shaheed was a disciple of Shah Inaayatullah the son of Shah Waliullah. Syed Ahmed can be credited with arising of first ever lashkar in modern times on modern footing with sole aim of conducting jihad. Movement had many centers like Patna, Allahabad, Patli to name few. They opted to carry out this jihad against the Sikhs in Punjab and for this purpose an extensive training and organizational infrastructure was raised which even today is traced in many of the similar outfits.

Initially five hundred men were selected which increased to 1000 in coming days, they were organized into various categories. Jamaat Khas was the inner circle of confidants and loyalists an elite group which was responsible for the lodging and safety of Syed Barelvi, Muqdmul-ul-Jaish was the advance guard responsible for gathering information and leading the main force. Saqtul Jaish another group was responsible for the administrative and logistic, an arms factory was also established at Panjtar. Two other groups were also formed one known as the Maimna {right wing} and other as Maisra {left wing} these were mounted mujahids. Training was as rigorous as in any of the regular regiment, fencing, wrestling, riding was paramount in nature. Propaganda was also catered for. Lowest structural unit comprised of 100 men with further distribution down to 25 men. They had evolved their communication signals and codes. For finances they did not had to look far, they would collect the zakat and ushur apart from other contributions from all over the India and it was properly audited and expanded. There were regional set ups which acted as the fund collection points and also to provide intelligence apart from caring for lodging of mujahideen in time of hour.

Mujaheedin were given three pairs of uniforms and two pair of shoes annually and two cakes of soap weekly, there was no pay but lodging and boarding were free. There were appointments as well namely as risaldar. Equipment included daggers, pistols and old vintage rifles, there was a separate armoury known as tausha khana. Flags played an important role in the organization, the Syed Barelvi had his own flag which was displayed only when he himself was participating in the battle other than this there were few other flags all having Quranic verses on them.; they were known as Sibgullah, Matiullah and Fatehullah.

In 1825 Syed Ahmed in a careful and well planned plan moved out from his home base along with his followers with an announcement of going for Hajj in order not to create any eye brows raising. They travelled from Bareilly passing through Tonk and Sind and then into Afghanistan and onwards to Mecca, after performing the hajj and it is apparent that in their stay at Mecca the whole party was influenced with the political and religious philosophies of Abdul Wahab. The Mujahideen later returned to Afghanistan and settled down near Nowshehra for a face off with Khalsa army. Syed Ahmed was not alone in his resistance the afghans were also looking for a battle to settle the score with Sikhs. Initially the mujahidin resorted to hit and run, propagating their cause and calling people for jihad. Syed Ahmed was not wholly successful in his aim because Afghans were defeated by the Sikhs led by Bud Singh in a series of battles known as Akora and Hazro but they were defeated at Nowshehra on 20th December 1826. Mujahideen fought valiantly and it was their quality which made them acceptable to the natives. Sikhs still retained Barakzai brothers as governor of Peshawar. Syed Barelvi announced his imamat in February 1827 and established an

Islamic Sharia at Hund. It was not very popular as it levied ushur on the natives and it resulted in the Syed Ahmed and his followers to move towards the east of Peshawar valley into the Mardan and into the Panjtar which is located in Khadu Khel territory, here the very first fort was constructed. All the prominent leaders were non pathan which included Moulvi Waris Ali Bengali, Imam Din Bengali, Ahmed Ali Bareilvi and Abu Muhammad Nasirabadi to name a few. In December 1830 these mujahedeen confronted the Nawab of Amb and defeated him. These small skirmishes resulted in the overall superiority of mujahedeen and they were able to establish an Islamic Sharia in Peshawar with Mazhar Ali appointed as qazi but he was soon murdered by the locals, the issue was the cultural variation between the Hindustani Mujahedeen as they were known and the locals who incidentally were known as Wilayati Mujahedeen in the rest of India. This forced the Syed Ahmed to migrate towards the Kashmir for its eventual capture but on its way he clashed with Sikh forces at Balakot which resulted in his martyrdom and he is known as Syed Ahmed Shaheed till now, the battle took place on 3-6th May 1831.

After the debacle at Balakot the mujahedeen organization was disrupted for some time the leadership was passed on to another Hindustani Mujahid Sheikh Wali Muhammad patli. People of the area soon forced the mujahedeen to depart from the area and they wandered around in the east of Peshawar and particularly in Swat and Buner area. Issue of zakat and ushur were two fundamental points of difference between the locals and the mujahedeen. They crossed east of Indus and made the present day Manshera and Garhi Habibullah as their centre but same conditions moved them from here as well. They settled at Sittana on the west bank of river Indus and here at Battle of Topi with local chiefs they suffered their defeat. In the same time period in the battle of Rojhan the Sikhs defeated the natives forcing the Sindhi Mujahedeen to shift to Sittana also, the leadership was also passed to them namely Moulvi Dehlvi but soon it was passed to the two brothers namely Moulvi Inayat Ali and Moulvi Wilayat Ali. Under them the mujahedeen again recaptured Balakot in 1845 after defeating the Sikhs. A short lived Islamic empire was established which is known as Landi Musalmani in Hazara, in this period even Muzaffarabad and Fatehgarh were also captured from Sikhs. The captured weapons were distributed among locals on conditions that they will enlist in time of need. Financially tribute {khiraj} was collected from tribes, for instance Jadoon tribe paid Rs30,000 and Pakli paid Rs 26000, all in all tribute was collected from nine different tribes. The last battle between the mujahedeen and the Sikhs took place in 1847 at Dub Pass close to Garhi Habibullah in which better tactics displayed by the Sikhs with Lieutenant Lumsden outclass the mujahedeen. After the battle the mujahedeen came across the Indus and settled in the Buner area making a fortified village, some of them also shifted to the Black mountains on the east of Indus.

Thus on the eve of British annexation of Punjab the main opposition was from the mujahedeen which were settled in the east of Peshawar. On the other hand the tribes of Waziristan had nothing to do with these mujahedeen so were the other Pashtu speaking tribes of Khyber. This area of mujahedeen in the Swat, Buner, Dir, Hazara later became their stronghold with their leaning towards the Wahabism. Historically thus Frontier campaigns can be classified into two broad categories one which were sent to deal with these mujahedeen, the most famous being the Ambella Pass and Black Mountains. On the other

hand the tribes of Waziristan were led by their own khans which did not have the religious fervor or colour rather they were fought and conducted on the tribal ego and pride without any central commander.

British East India Company

On 31st December 1600 Queen Elizabeth granted a charter to 'The Company of Merchants of London trading unto the East Indies.' On 11th January 1613 the Mughal Emperor Jahangir issued a firman to establish a factory at Surat to Captain Best the company's representative, in 1625 a trading centre established at Masulipatam {Madras} and in 1634 a trading factory was established at Piplée {Bengal}. Later these factories and trading centres were fortified and troops some British some natives were employed for the protection, in 1698 a new Company of Merchants received its charter, in 1708 both companies were amalgamated under the title of The United Company of Merchants of England trading to the East Indies or East India Company. Thus these areas became the presidencies Bombay, Madras and Bengal each having its own army commanded by separate commander in chief who also was the president answerable to directors at London. By 1741 the Bombay Army had a battalion of troops consisting of seven companies and formal artillery was raised in 1748, in the same year Major Lawrence Stringer was appointed as the commander in chief of all the armies in India. Promotion was strictly based upon seniority only in Bombay the battalion system was adopted in other two presidencies the companies remained the basic unit. The feud between the French & British trading companies brought a larger influx of European troops into India and also an increase in the army of native soldiers. In 1754 the British and French troops clashed at Madras in the same year the first detachment of Royal Troops 39th Foot arrived in India as reinforcement it also brought into effect the Mutiny Act into India thus the forces in India were divided into Royal Troops, Company's European Troops and Company's Native Troops. In 1757 the first Indian Regiment was organised onto European pattern it had native troops but officers were all British it was known as 'Lal Paltan', it had three British officers several British non commissioned officers 42 Indian officers and 820 Indian rank and file, the Paltan had ten companies. It also had a Indian commandant and adjutant. In Madras six such battalions were raised in 1759 and in Bombay native battalions were raised in 1767, the man responsible for this pragmatic organisation was Clive known as 'Clive of Plassey' in history. The officers of East India Company troops despite their seniority were junior to the King's troops and this created several mutinies among them mainly over pay the native Bengal troops also show their resentment mainly over the pay. This resulted in reorganisation of the army in India in 1796 the number of British troops in India both company & King amounted to over 13000 where as the native troops numbered around 57000. Reorganisation resulted in decrease of native troops and increase in the number of British officers which were increased to 22 from the previous 12, the system of two battalion regiment was also introduced. A colonel commanded the regiment having two lieutenant colonels, one for each battalion which also had one major, four captains, 11 lieutenants and five ensigns. The battalions were also numbered for the first

time in this organisation. In 1824 further reforms were carried out in the army which resulted in the breaking up of two battalion regiment for the Indian troops it also necessitated renumbering of battalions the irregular cavalry regiments were also raised the ratio of cavalry to infantry battalions was 1 to 7.

Great Game & Forward Policy

British till 1800 had very little knowledge of the areas west of Indus, they sent young officers to explore the frontiers, it was in relation to the Napoleon's {1769 – 1821} threat and the role of Persia in it, it resulted in the 1801 Anglo – Persian Treaty. After 1815 the so called threat changed from France to Russia and the area of interest also shifted towards the West, North West & North of Indus Valley. Captain Alexander Burnes { 1805 – 1841 } was one of the pioneer explorer. By this time in history the area West of present day Afghanistan was a conglomeration of independent small valley states all Islamic in nature like Khiva and Merv¹³⁰, these were captured by the Russians therefore British in order to keep an eye on the affairs wanted to have a friendly and a subservient ruler in Kabul which was at time under control of Dost Muhammad. British failed in diplomacy to achieve their aim and therefore the

First Afghan War, background.

History of Afghanistan starts with the assassination of Persian Emperor Nadir Shah in 1747, Nadir Shah stands as high in history as Napoleon in later years, he expanded north and eastward, thus including the present day Afghanistan as far as beyond Oxus and in further east had Delhi under his subjugation which he plundered once.. Ahmed Khan was one of his favourite general, in the confusion that arose after the assassination; Ahmed made good use of the incoming caravan full of royal jewels and rode off to the Afghanistan, a born leader of men. He just had five hundred men with him and a treasure with this he found an empire ; the present day Afghanistan, which again had Delhi under its control and all the area between Kabul and Delhi including Multan and Sind , in the north he went beyond Oxus. Inj the west had Persian province of Khorasan under him with Shah Rukh grand son of Nadir shah ruling as his deputy.

Ahmed shah was a racist, a nationalist, a fascist himself belonging to the Saddozai clan of mountain dwellers afghans who can be termed as the inhabitants of western Hindukush slopes and valleys. He proclaimed himself as Ahmed shah 'Durr-i-Durrani' pearl of pearls; thus Abdali tribesmen became known as Durrani also. Within the tribe there were two major clans the Saddozai and Barakzai, the power was in the hand of Saddozai but vizier was from Barakzai to have a balance of power . Ahmed Shah died in 1773 and succeeded by his son Timur Shah who ruled peacefully for another twenty years till when he died in 1793; the rise of French Revolution, America already had its war of independence in 1776. Within

¹³⁰ Anila, Bali .*THE RUSSO-AFGHAN BOUNDARY DEMARCATION 1884-95:BRITAIN AND THE RUSSIAN THREAT TO THE SECURITY OF INDIA*, {School of Humanities, University of Ulster.Thesis submitted for the degree of D.Phil.1985}. pp 25-27

the Punjab the Sikhs were on the rise having almost physical control of Lahore and its surroundings, the Mughul emperor at Delhi was a power less person in the face of two adversaries the Timur Shah or afghans in the west and British east India company in the east in Bengal. The area along the Ganges under the Oudh was a Muslim state with its ruler nominally accepting the Mughul sovereign presence. There was hardly any force with emperor. Hindu Marhattas were the other strong hawk in the south of Delhi and eyeing the capital.

Timur Shah died leaving behind 23 sons and 13 daughters, he was succeeded by his son Zaman shah, there was secessionist movements going on with half brother Mahmud holding Heart in the wet and Humayun another half brother who was governor of Kandahar was finally beaten in the battle ground by the only real brother of Shah Zaman; the Shah Shuja.

Persia the other great empire of yesteryears was still on its own at th turn of century with able Agha Muhammad being in power he had seized the Meshed which was ruled by the Shah Rukh, Meshed was the capital of Khorasan , he blinded Sahn Rukh and put him in prison thus ended the Afghan control of the Persian area. This Afghan- Persian conflict which started after the rise of the Nadir Shah and later that of Ahmed Shah remained in forefront for another two hundred years. Persians with the death of Timur Shah now were on the rise and seizing the lost provinces from Afghan who naturally consider this to be their own, similar issue was to surface in Indus Valley also where after the rise of Ranjit Singh the Sikhs started getting the areas of Punjab and Kasmhir along with Multan and Peshawar. Sikhs did not had any historical claim over these only geography was their main logic, Ranjit in a way represent to Sikhs what Ahmed Shah is to Afghans.

Zaman Shah finally arrived at Lahore which in 1799 was captured by the Ranjit Singh he was received with courtesy and imperial grandeur; the Sikhs simply paid a tribute to him and Zaman in return accepted the Sikh control over Lahore. It was simple diplomacy if the Afghans were strong they would have taken back the Lahore and Mashed by force but now settled down for nominal submission which was the eastern way of being flexible . Zaman Shah 's arrival in Lahore set the course of events in action in sub continent it was alarming for the British as the Nawab of Oudh and other Muslim rulers generally look forward towards the afghan help in the restoration of power in favour of Muslims.

Persia was important and not the Afghanistan but the corridor leading from Persia passes through the Afghanistan, it is three millennium old route from Persia which follows Kandahar, Ghazni, Kabul and into India, with few passes allowing this west –east movement, water was the major issue as only very few places have water to sustain any caravan or military movement, Chagai was one such place.

Mahmud the half brother of Zaman Shah still in power at Herat was involved in a plot to assassinate the Zaman Shah but it was unearthed early thus in the end Mahmud had to fled to Persia but another Painda Khan the Barakzai sardar and vizier was put to death openly. Resultantly Painda's son Fateh Khan Barakzai joined Mahmud in Persia with a vow to avenge the death of his father. In **1801** the Mahmud marched towards Kandahar and captured it then marched into Kabul and not only captured Zaman Shah but also took his eyes

out. Shuja Mulk Sadozai the only real brother of Zaman Shah was then the governor of Peshawar he thus declared his independence but he soon lost it to the Sikhs. Ranjit Singh who was closely following the civil war in Afghanistan took his time and then declared his independence too.

Mahmud Sadozai who now took over Afghanistan was a successful leader of men , he had Ghilzais the strong tribe living astride the Hindukush into subjugation, he drove back the Uzbeks who had taken over the areas south of Oxus. Shuja in the mean time had tried to defeat him in the battle field but twice lost it and settled in India. In 1802 the intrigue's in Afghanistan led to the downfall of Mahmud and Shah Shuja entered Kabul unopposed; he took his revenge and blinded Mahmud, imprisoning him in a dungeon but as the story goes the Mahmud was able to escape from it with the help of his followers ; this clan loyalty runs too deep. Shah Shuja had the worst of the news at the mid night when he was informed that Mahmud has escaped from the dungeon. Mahmud was again defeated in a battle field and it was then that Shah Shuja came to Peshawar for his first meeting with the British delegation led by Mosn Stuart Elphinstone in 1809 at Peshawar.

Lord Wellesley is attributed with the brilliant piece of strategy when he devised the plan to put Persian pressure over the Zaman Shah in order to keep him out of Indian politics. The Persian monarch had earlier rejected the afghan claim over the Mehmed rather he marched towards Herat , it was this move which compelled Zaman Shah to cut his stay in Lahore and return back to Peshawar. Captain John Malcolm led a mission to the court of Fateh Khan to put this plan into practice. This mission had two purpose one was to put pressure on the Afghan monarch and secondly to thwart any intrusion of French into the Persia due to the fear of the Napoleon adventure towards the India. The treaty signed specified this . Russia had seized the Persian provinces of Georgia and Armenia in 1804 , thus Napoleon made an offer to Persia against Russia. Napoleon in the mean time had declared war on Russia in 1805 thus his proposal now had the authenticity of evidence; Fateh Shah finally succumbed to the French pressure and signed a treaty in **1807** under which he agreed to maintain an army ready to walk through Afghanistan{ Kabul and Kandahar} towards India. Unfortunately Fateh Kahn was bit late in his timings as Napoleon made a peace treaty with Russia in same year at the Convention of Tilsit; there was no mentioning of returning of Persian provinces back to Persia as Napoleon had earlier promised but such are the ways of warfare where the outcome of battlefield ultimately decides the fulfillment of diplomatic promises. Britain was now at war with Russia and with French as well, thus a mission was sent to Persia in 1808-09 led by the Sir Harford Jones representing the crown and Malcolm representing the company. They increased the Fateh Kahn's subsidy and presented a diamond as well. Fateh Kahn realizing his earlier folly took the bait and came back in the British camp. It is obvious now that Persia which layed beyond the vast desert of Baluchistan far far away from their Indian border of Sutlej was still important in the global or regional politics. Thus no power was to be allowed to have any control over the neighboring countries of India. In the north the Chinese were behind the great wall of Himalaya , in the east the jungles of Burma was another barrier, *although in 1853 and the in 1861 the Burma was invaded and finally annexed in 1874 by the British India.*

Thus in **1809-09** two important missions were sent from India , one to the Persia and later the Elphinstone- Shah Shuja meeting at Peshawar. Shah Shuja was cordial although at this stage {1809} the fear of napoleon had passed way but nevertheless at that time the importance was still there, Shah Shuja agreed to keep the French and Russians out of Afghanistan in return for a subsidy. The wheel of history turned faster and while he was still fresh from signing the treaty this half brother the blind Mahmud and Fateh Khan Baarkzai marched into Kandahar , Shah Shuja had to leave Peshawar and was duly defeated at Gandamak a village west of Jalalabad. Shah Shuja escaped and sought asylum at Ludhiana where his brother Zaman Shah was already living.

Herat and Harem 1816.

Herat was governed by a half brother of Mahmud by the name of Firuz, who was partially independent , Persians had long their eyes on the Herat as they consider it to be part of their empire thus they invested heavily against Herat, in return Firuz asked for help from Kabul . Fateh Khan had been irritated by the semi independence of Firuz thus he led an army by himself and his brother Dost Muhammad which not only pushed back Persians but later in search of treasures of Firuz , Fateh Khan rather Dost Muhammad violated the sanctity of the harem, one of the ladies present was the daughter of Mahmud. This was the cause for which he despite being victorious was flayed alive , blinded and then hacked to death publicly in Kabul . This caused widespread rebellion in which Mahmud once again found himself at Herat taking refugee , he now acknowledge the suzerainty of the Persians over Herat.

Fateh Kahn had twenty one sons and Muhammad Azam Khan the eldest now occupied the power, the cultural heritage of Afghanistan is such that only the Saddozai can be ruler and Bararkzai as the vizier , Shah Shuja was given the offer to be a nominal head of state but he refused. In 1826 Sikhs finally defeated the Afghans at the Battle of Nowshetra which drove out the afghans out of the plains , Ranjit however allowed one of the Barakzai to remain as the governor of Peshawar. Dost Muhammad in **186** was finally able to garb the Kabul and thus became the leading figure, his hostile brother holding the Kandahar and Peshawar with Mahmud at Herat.

Kandahar 1834.

In 1834 the Shah Shuja left Ludhiana with the consent of British at the head of 22000 Afghans to capture Kabul, he adopted the Quetta – Kandahar route, Quetta was then a Afghan province. Kandahar at that time was held by Khundeil Kahn the brother of Dost Muhammad, who came to the rescue of him and defeated the Shah Shuja. Shah Shuja forces were led an adventurer Scot by the name of Campbell. Now Dost Muhammad after the victory proclaimed himself to be amir instead of shah and power came in the hands of Barakzai for the first time, Ranjit on the other hand had annexed Peshawar while Dost Muhammad was away at Kandahar.

Dost Muhammad first attempt soon after coronation was an attempt to conquer the Peshawar back; in a master stroke of diplomacy Ranjit met Dost Muhammad who had ,marched down with an army, Ranjit was able to create dissension among the Afghan camp and Dost had to return empty hand.

1838.

By this time the Russian advance towards the east had not started yet, 1828 Russo-Persian Treaty of Turkomanchi under which the Persians acceded the loss of their frontier provinces of Georgia and Armenia which Persian tried to took back militarily but failed thus they settled for peace which put them under the Russian sphere of influence. Now the Persians were set to outset their losses by recapturing the Heart, Kandahar and Kabul their former provinces. Russians had no hesitation in backing the Persians but British were now alerted to the possible inclusion of Afghanistan under the Persians which infact means the Russians influence .

Persian policy from 1832 till 1857 remained focus on the capture of Heart and this was the cause of first Afghan-Anglo war. In 1832 Abbas Mirza the Persian heir apparent led and marched into Khorasan with a force aiming at restoring the authority of Shah, he finally besieged Herat then governed by the Kamran Mirza the son of Mahmud the former Shah of Afghanistan with Yar Muhammad as his vizier. Fate played its part and Abbas Mirza died thus Abbas Mirza summoned back to the Tehran, his son Mohammad Mirza thus patched up the affairs at Herat and marched back to Tehran. In the end it was Muhammad Shah who took over the reins of Persia who again marched to Herat in 1837 and that set the First Afghan War rolling.

Dost Muhammad was not strong enough to counter the Sikhs at Peshawar let alone to tackle the Persian menace at best he could tackle them one by one thus he first approached British , on the other hand his two brothers who were holding the Kandahar were alarmed at the Dost Muhammad rising power and approach the Persian and even Russians, it were the Russians who responded by sending one Captain Vitkavich to Kandahar. Lord Auckland on the other hand sends one mission headed by Alexander Burnes who had already been in Kabul as a traveler before. Thus at that point the representatives from both Britain and Russia were at Kabul, Russians were able to induce the Kandahar ruler to have an agreement with Persia , on the other hand at Kabul, Dost Muhammad kept him waiting pending the result of his agreement or talks with Burnes. The end result of these talks which accepted the suzerainty of Kabul over Peshawar with a tribute paid to Ranjit Singh and sending of an army to Herat for its defence were both rejected by Lord Auckland. 'It is impossible to avoid condemning the policy of Lord Auckland'¹³¹. This drove Dost Muhammad into Russian laps who joined his brothers into the same pact. Suzerainty of Shah of Persia was acknowledged and Kabul army was promised for the capture of Herat held by Yar Muhammad in return for equal gratitude in Persian army for capture of Peshawar, Persian dominance with Russian in

¹³¹ Sir Percy skyes, Mortimer Durand, p-72

background on the western frontiers of India was a failure of the diplomacy and this had to be rectified.

*In order to repel the shadow the Russian aggression we had resolved to force Shah Shuja a weak and worthless exile, upon the Afghan people till then well disposed towards us and this great and unprovoked injustice the cause of all our subsequent troubles in Afghanistan was to be effected by military measures of which the rashness and folly seem at the present day almost inconceivable. The objects of the expedition were two fold, first the overthrow of the Barkzai dynasty and the restoration of Shah Shuja to the throne of his fathers; secondly the relief or capture of Herat, then besieged by the Persians with Russian countenance and aid.*¹³²

1840, War.

Plan was to have 20,000 British troops to march from Ferozpur towards the Kandahar through the Sind covering a distance of 850 miles, Kandahar to Herat another 380 miles, total of 1200 miles. Edward Pottinger was a British officer who had reached the Herat in disguise and later helped in the improvement of garrison defenses. British army passes through Bolan Pass after much suffering and pain it stood to its name and reached Kandahar and defeated the governor Kuhendil Khan, Shah Shuja was formally inaugurated as the Shah of Afghanistan. General Sir Keane was the commander in chief of this force and Sir William McNaughton his political advisor, they next move towards Ghazni. At Ghazni the Henry Mortimer Durand shine and later he was responsible in leading an assault on the city through Kabul gate, a medal was later inaugurated in his name, Sir Keane was created Baron Keane of Ghazni. In August 1840 British marched into Kabul, Dost Muhammad had already fled the scene and took asylum with Amir of Bukhara, Dost Muhammad later surrendered to British after three months.

The force consisted of two infantry divisions, of which the first, commanded by Major-General Sir Willoughby Cotton, contained three brigades, commanded respectively by Colonels Sale, Nott, and Dennis. Major-General Duncan commanded the second infantry division of the two brigades, of which one was commanded by Colonel Roberts, the other by Colonel Worsley. The 6000 troops raised for Shah Soojah, who were under Fane's orders, and were officered from British army in India, had been recently and hurriedly recruited, and although rapidly improving, were not yet in a state of high efficiency. The contingent which the Bombay Presidency was to furnish to the 'Army of the Indus,' and which landed about the close of the year near the mouth of the Indus, was under the command of General Sir John Keane, the Commander-in-Chief of the Bombay army. The Bombay force was about 5000 strong. General Fane the commander in chief had never taken kindly to the project, declined to associate himself with the diminished array that remained. The command of the Bengal column fell to Sir Willoughby Cotton, with whom as his aide-de-camp rode that Henry Havelock whose name twenty years later was to ring through India and England. Duncan's

¹³² Sir Percy Skyes, Mortimer Durand, p-73. The italics represent the writing of Sir Henry Mortimer who took part in the Afghan war and was later Foreign Secretary of India. He wrote the Official history of the First Anglo-Afghan War which was published in 1879.

division was to stand fast at Ferozepore as a support, by which disposition the strength of the Bengal marching force was cut down to about 9500 fighting men. After its junction with the Bombay column, the army would be 14,500 strong, without reckoning the Shah's contingent.

At length, on December 10th, 1838, Cotton began the long march which was not to terminate at Cabul until August 6th of the following year. The chosen route was by the left bank of the Sutlej to its junction with the Indus, down the left bank of the Indus to the crossing point at Roree, and from Sukkur across the Scinde and northern Belooch provinces by the Bolan and Kojuk passes to Candahar, thence by Khelat-i-Ghilzai and Ghuznee to Cabul. . On the way the column would have to effect a junction with the Bombay force, which at Vikkur was distant 800 miles from Ferozepore. Of the distance of 850 miles from the latter post to Candahar the first half to the crossing of the Indus presented no serious difficulties, but from Sukkur beyond the country was inhospitable and cruelly rugged. Marching through Bhawalpore and Northern Scinde, without noteworthy incident save heavy losses of draught cattle, Cotton's army reached

Roree, the point at which the Indus was to be crossed, in the third week of January 1839

Fallout of First Afghan War. The British instead of withdrawing opted to stay at Kabul. It was more of imperial mindset than anything else, for the trading company and for Lord Auckland it was the high point where a colony has been made in the extreme west. McNoughton the political officer now started playing the politics but it backfired miserably. The cost of expedition was the paramount and all efforts were made to reduce it. Even now the austerity drives of many countries usually starts from cutting the allowances and perks of junior officials which normally have no or very little bearing on the overall costs. In Afghanistan or more particularly in the orient the allowances paid to the tribes are the best surety of peace, the allowances of key tribes including the Ghilzais were cut down, it was done more drastically in the autumn of 1841, Ghilzais occupied the area between the Kabul and Jalalabad; Brigadier Sale was moved from Kabul to overcome this rebellion which he did after a hot clash which resulted in his being closed in the Gandamak Fort.

British garrison at Kabul was attacked and Burnes was killed, General Elphinstone was weak and indecisive, Akbar Khan a son of Dost Muhammad was calling the shot, a safe passage was promised to the British garrison, the British finally started their march in mid winter and none survived except one surgeon Brydon. Shah Shuja was killed outside his Kabul palace, in the end Zaman Khan a nephew of Dost Muhammad was proclaimed as amir overlooking the Akbar Khan.

A British retaliatory force was assembled under General Frederick Pollock at Peshawar, it forced its way through Khyber Pass and relieved Jalalabad it later moved to Kabul burnt down the bazaar on 15th September 1842 before defeating Ghilzais at Battle of Jagdallak, he was joined by General Nott who had held the Kandahar in all these turbulent days, both later returned to Peshawar and Kabul was left to its own. Dost Muhammad made his comeback and was accepted as the ruler of Afghanistan by his own people.

Russian Advance; 1842-1878

The Russian advance towards the east was as natural as the British advance towards west. From 1838 onwards the Russians set on course towards the east. The causes of Russian advance are similar to the reason of British anxiety on its frontiers mainly the rising and constant attacks /raids on its territories. In 1844 sea of Aral was explored and in 1847 a fort was constructed at the mouth of Syr Darya. With this fort in 1855 Aik Masjid an important fortress of Khokand Khanate was overran; it was 200 miles upstream. Crimean war was a temporary friction on the east ward movement, in 1865 Tashkent was captured and now the important khanate of Khiva and Bokhara were threatened while Khokand was already taking its last breath. Bokhara was defeated in 1868 Samarkand was occupied and Khokand was shattered into history in 1876, three years earlier Khiva was overrun without any opposition . Thus by 1876 the threat of Russia which was considered as mind fantasy in 1838 was now a reality.

Dost Muhammad {d1863}.

Dost Muhammad Barakzai can be conferred as the father of modern Afghanistan , the kingdom which Ahmad Shah Abdalli had set up in 1750 had shattered in its basic ingredients within a quarter of century after the death of great man in 1773. Now the power was in the hands of able vizier Barakzai clan. Dost Muhammad's greatest feat is in uniting the Afghanistan which he did in 1863 before his death.

Twenty years he ruled after the British folly of 1840. He showed the great astute which is manifested with the Vizier in the orient. It is a great continuation of history that family who are trusted with single purpose by the ruler have kept that traits intact. Look at Viziers of Ranjit Singh the great Faqir brothers who were mastermind in many of the treaties conducted with the British and Afghans. The era of blood shed which was so predominant in the Mughul era especially in the Aurangzeb was replaced with a mixture of western and eastern philosophy and in this the vizier played important role in all the dynasties. Dost Muhammad had the same blood running in his veins in which decisions are made with logic rather than the emotion a feat so commonly attached with the ruling families. Dost opened up with British after the annexation of Punjab in 1849 by them . The Anglo –Sikh wars had finally put the British as the sole power with whom Afghans had to deal with. Dost in the 1848 had finally thrown his dice with the Sikhs when he sent 4000 cavalry troops for their battle against the British at Gujarat; but they could not turn the day in favour of Afghans or Sikhs. Had the outcome of that battle been different than Dost Muhammad would have put forward his stake on Peshawar and boundaries would have been drawn back to 1799 era.

In 1855 Dost Muhammad had the first diplomatic opening with British which resulted in a treaty in 1857 with Lawrence of Punjab at Peshawar. Persian move against Herat in 1857 was another factor in his favour, Persians had captured the Herat and British were anxious to keep them out but instead of repeating the folly of 1840 they induced Dost Muhammad to carry out the same task at a subsidy of 10,000 pounds per month as long as he remains engaged with conflict along with weapons the most prized by Afghans. In the end Persians were driven out of Herat mainly due to British naval action at Bushire and Muhmamerah. After Dost Muhammad's death anarchy once again spread in the country with rival brothers putting claim on the kingship in the end Sher Ali came out as winner but for short time as in

1867 he was back in the fortress of Herat taking refuge from his brother who had captured the Kabul, his usurpers include his half brother Afzal Khan who died soon and replaced by another half brother Azim Khan and Abdur Rehman.; soon they all were driven out and Sher Afzal was back in Kabul in 1868.

British had adopted a wise policy of masterly inactivity in which they remain aloof from the internal politics of Afghanistan but when Sher Ali was back in Kabul and had quelled all the mutinies then viceroy presented him with a subsidy of 60,000 pounds and same amount next year. In modern times it can be termed as grant which in those days and even now is an accepted mode of accepting one's sovereignty. In 1869 Sher Ali came down via Peshawar to meet Lord Mayo at Umballa in Punjab; he was given a grand reception and farewell.

Central Asian Playground

One key difference from past has been the way of setting up the rules of games and the limit of the arena in the western frontier of India from the past. Now the boundaries were laid down, first the British arbitrated between the Persia and Afghanistan over the boundary at Herat, Sistan. The Persia had been able to get hold of her lost province and this arbitration speaks itself of the British influence, instead of Russia it was the Britain which was acting as the umpire. Persia was allowed to keep the fertile west of Helmand and Afghanistan was given the barren eastern half, it severely tested the Afghanistan patience but it accepted the decision. One thing has to be said in the defence of Afghan culture that it remained true to the words given or agreed upon. It did not please the Persians either.

In 1869 another significant agreement was the one which took place between Russia and Great Britain under which the lines of influence were drawn in which Russia agreed to keep the Afghanistan out of its sphere, the boundaries between the Russia and Afghanistan had to be drawn and agreed upon. This was the most significant step in almost thousand years of Central Asia history in which the area of sphere was agreed upon not on the battlefield but in the foreign offices. Gortchakoff the Russian gave assurance to Lord Clarendon 'Afghanistan is completely outside the sphere within which Russia might be called upon to exercise influence'¹³³. But what constitutes Afghanistan was a prickly issue specially the provinces of Wakhan and Badkhashan. Amir Sher Ali tried to have a defence pact against the Russia but Britain in the light of 1869 agreement with Russia declined it. Sher Ali was presented with 5000 Enfield Rifles and 50,000 pounds. It all looks so familiar with modern day diplomacy in which also the procurement of modern arms and financial aid increases the prestige of the ruling junta.

British policy was not to interfere in Kabul, the Russian advance cannot be checked from Afghanistan and the Amir when threatened will come to the Calcutta and till then the Amir should not have an undue importance of him. Russian advance must be stopped through European diplomacy, the lessons of First Afghan War were fresh in the minds of Masterly Inactivity. All this changed with Lord Lytton taking over the charge from Lord Northbrook in 1876, hawks were back in chair both at Calcutta and at London. Russian fever had caught them finally. In 1877 Russia declared war on Turkey and Great Britain sent 5000 Indian

¹³³ Percy Skyes, Mortimer Durand, p-82.

troops to Malta. In the same breadth Lord Lytton sent a mission towards Kabul which was not entertained and allowed to pass through Khyber and this was taken as the great insult and final proof of Afghan-Russo friendship of evil designs. Lytton wanted to have a permanent military officer at Kabul which Sher Ali resisted. He was in fact caught between the sea and the devil, Russian General Kauffman also arrived at Kabul with a mission and Sher Ali realized his position, Russians had finally put off their face of neutrality and decided to have Afghanistan under their sphere. Diplomacy moved at fast pace a day before Sher Ali finally agreed to entertain the Russian mission the treaty of Berlin was signed between the Britain and Russia; it was too late now. Russian mission left and Britain demanded the same reception of its mission which was refused and this was the final act which led to Second Afghan War.

Military operation were modified from the first war, now three expeditionary force were formed, one move on the traditional route of Quetta-Kandahar led by Sir Donald Stewart occupied Kandahar without much resistance, the central force moving through Kurram –Peiwar- Kabul under Major General Sir Fredrick Roberts, it was successful in crossing the Peiwar Kotal. The northern force moved through Khyber Pass under.....captured Ali Masjid, Jalalabad and entered Kabul. Sher Ali had fled Kabul on the fall of Peiwar Kotal releasing his son Yakub Khan whom he had imprisoned for last six years. Sher Ali took refugee with Russian general Kauffmann, he died few weeks later at Mazar Shariff.

It was Yakub Khan who signed the famous treaty at Gandamak on 26th May 1879. He agreed to assign the districts of Pishin & Sibi in south and Kurram in the centre along with accepting British control over Khyber Pass. He also surrendered his rights as an independent nation to undertake foreign policy with other powers, in short he became a vassal of Calcutta. Yakub Khan also agreed to have the British mission at Kabul. Sir Louis Cavagnari was appointed the head of British mission at Kabul. Trouble started soon with six regiments marching from Herat to claim their pay, they were not paid in full by the Amir. This set the event in motion with the half paid mob of militia stoning the British residency in frustration and the guards at the mission building {Guides Cavalry} firing on the mob and agitation started. Just like American embassy in Tehran in 1979 the mob soon was inside the compound and all British personals massacred, the history had repeated itself with same results as in 1842; this time there were no survivors.

Annexation of Punjab 1849

After the death of Ranjeet Singh the Sikh empire collapsed after waging two wars against the British, First Anglo – Sikh War { 1845 – 1846 } which resulted in cessation of certain areas of Punjab to the British including Kashmir, the resultant Second Anglo - Sikh war {1848 – 1849} resulted in annexation of Punjab by the BEIC, with Sir Henry Lawrence {1806 – 1857} and his ‘Young Men’ now trying to govern the Punjab especially the North Western Frontier. Henry’s brother John Lawrence was among those Young Men, he later became the Viceroy of India {1864 – 1869}. Among those Young Men who tried to solve the riddle of North West included Captain James Abbott { Abbottabad} John Coke { Coke’s Infantry} Lieutenant Harry Lumsden { Corps of Guides } Captain Neville Chamberlain {

Later field Marshall}. Political Agents John Nicholson { Nicholson Memorial near Islamabad} Lieutenant Herbert Edwardes {1819 – 1868} founder of Edwardesabad { Modern Bannu} Lieutenant William Hodson {1821 – 1858 } of ‘Hodson Horse’ & ‘Guides Cavalry’ Captain John Coke {1806 – 1897} of ‘1st Punjab Regiment’ . They ‘Young Men’ raised the Corps of Guides in 1846 -47, the very first instance of recruiting the natives into a military organisation no matter how loose but still to work under the British Officers. Success of Guides led to formation of a separate force the Punjab Irregular Frontier Force {1849}, under command of Punjab Government instead of Central Government at Calcutta¹³⁴. Henry Lawrence’s Young Men and carried out the administrative reforms in the frontier areas dividing it into frontier districts { Peshawar, Kohat, Hazara, Bannu & Derajat} acting into treaties, pacts and agreements with the native Pathan

Punjab was divided into ten administrative divisions each headed by a commissioner having two or three districts under him with a deputy commissioner in charge. Peshawar Division was one such division and so was the Dera Jat which comprised of Dera Ismail Khan and Dera Ghazi Khan. Bannu was part of DI Khan and only in 1861 it was given the status of a district.

Princely States of India

Chitral , Dir, Swat, Amb, Kalat were princely states , there were very few such states which became part of Pakistan and where frontier Corps was employed or which became part of it thus it is pertinent to have a brief look at the overall political system of India. There are two terms , one India and other British India to denote the present day Pakistan, India and Bangladesh before 1947. British India encompasses all the area which was previously under the British East India Company and after 1857 came under the jurisdiction of Queen Victoria and British parliament headed by Prime Minister. The parliament appointed a viceroy normally for tenure of six-eight years. Within the cabinet there was an India office headed by a Secretary of India , it was he who was answerable to the Prime Minister on India. It must be noted that for foreign affairs of Great Britain there was a foreign secretary also but he had no jurisdiction on India. In India the viceroy was the last word on all affairs, he had a Commander in Chief of Army, a Secretary of Foreign Affairs and other officials. India was divided administratively into Provinces which included Bombay {Sind was part of it} Bengal, United Provinces and after 1849 the Punjab; within which the NWFP was created in 1903 but it was not at par with other provinces as it was directly placed under the viceroy due to its strategic position.

Apart from provinces there were over 560 princely states of various size and population , the big states included Hyderabad Deccan , Jammu & Kashmir. Gwalior, Baroda to name a few. British gradually moved westward and in this process certain states were annexed like Oudh in 1852 which became a province and many others were left at their own on certain conditions the paramount being , not to indulge or support anti British military

¹³⁴ Timothy Robert Moreman "*Passing It On The Army In India & The Development Of Frontier Warfare 1849-1947*., Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, King's College, University of London. pp 20-25

campaigns. These states were ruled by princes, although all the states had different titles like raja, rao, nawab, thakur, nizam to name a few but British all classified them as princes. Thus ‘**British India**’ denotes the area which was under British administration in form of provinces and ‘**India**’ represents the princely states. 122 states were directly ruled by the central government from Calcutta {Delhi became capital after 1911} in other over 400 states there were political agents who were responsible to the provincial governors, commissioners and deputy commissioners. **Tribal Areas** were different from the other two misnomers of India and British India and they remained so till the last day of raj. These tribal areas mostly on western frontiers but also on eastern and northern frontiers were directly under the viceroy, the political agents were carefully selected and till 1930 all were British. The political agents were responsible to the foreign office of India. In case of NW Frontier the political agents communicated in the same pattern to the chief commissioner, the first governor of NW Frontier was appointed in 1935. Baluchistan itself was another adjoining political agency south of NW Frontier. The princes of these states were given subsidy and were allowed certain gun salutes depending upon their importance. Viceroy was authorized 1010 gun salute whereas the Nizam of Deccan and maharaja of Kashmir were entitled 21 gun salutes most of the princes were entitled nine gun salutes. States were allowed to have a militia or army with British officers overlooking the affairs. Honorary ranks of lieutenant to general {very rarely} were bestowed upon the princes, states had their own flags and were not bound to follow the British legal system as enforced in British India rather own cultures were followed.

Indian Army and British Army in India also represent two different segments of the army. The regular British army regiments had a tenure of duty in India spanning over five to seven years, they had exclusive all British ranks; they were known as British Army in India. The standard army which took its birth with the BEIC comprising of British Officers and native other ranks was known as Indian Army. Native officers were given commissions after First World War. Indian Army had its own commander in chief; there was some discrepancy among the allowances of both armies. It was in 1907 that a new corps was raised known as frontier Corps mainly responsible for the Western Frontiers of India & British India. Ironically there were few princely states on the western frontiers they included Kashmir in the north followed by Nigar, Hunza, Tangrel, Chitral, Dir, Swat, Amb, Tank and Kalat in south. A new concept of military was introduced comprising of Militia, Levies, Scouts, Rifles, Border Military police supported by regular army.

Politically the administration was run on bureaucratic system with precise instructions and protocols to follow. The officers who were inducted in the district administration were either inducted directly through the competitions or from regular army; again either on recommendations or through examination. These officers were allowed to retain their army ranks and were also allowed to automatically enhance their prefixes of rank in accordance with the routine promotion of officers in army. Thus Major General Sikander Mirza one of the very first Indian to receive his commission from Sandhurst in 1920 was inducted in foreign service and posted as political agent when he was captain but despite remaining in civil service he still changed his rank whenever his seniority was promoted in army, he finally became a defence secretary of Pakistan in 1952 and then a governor general and finally he took oath as the first president of Pakistan in 1956. Suzerainty over British India &

India from 1857 onwards rested with the crown Queen Victoria was proclaimed as Empress of India in 1876 followed by King –Emperor Edward VII, the title Emperor was meant for India.

Princely states were organized into presidency {Madras} Residency{Kashmir, Deccan} and agency. These state agencies dealt with the princely states, the North Western Frontier States Agency looked after the princely states on North western frontier, down below was the Baluchistan Agency which had the {Kalat, Kharan, Las Bela, Makran}. One distinct feature of this western frontier was the creation of political agencies on the same footing as for princely states to deal with the tribes, who hitherto never had any central authority to submit. Political agent in these tribal agencies had the same position as other political agents rather they were the pick of the pick, personally interviewed by the viceroy which mainly was in the form of the evening tea with viceroy and vicerine.

This whole composition and relation between the princes and suzerain remained as per royal protocol based upon century old customs. Ironically the layout of the states was such that British India did not have any direct contact with the Afghanistan, Iran and China. The tribes inhabiting these tracts were free men in every sense. They were not savage like the African tribes with whom the white men first had contact. The tribes on the eastern frontier were different in every sense from the western tribes separated by a thousand miles. The eastern frontier was jungle with Burma as the neighbor, weather tropical with torrential rainfall, swamps and weather based water channels, jungle full of wild life. How civilization penetrated is still a mystery as when they were discovered they were living and are still living in the old Dravidian jungle way of life. Humid weather gave them dark skin, short height, fragile body and a culture basing upon nudity. Burma was eventually annexed with British India after the Anglo-Burmese wars

The annexation of the Punjab in 1846 brought forward the BEIC troops to the banks of River Indus the traditional natural boundary between two civilizations, on the Western bank were the foothills. BEIC and especially the lieutenant governor of Punjab, Lawrence were adamant to protect the subject population inhabiting the forward edge of British Empire, BEIC had taken over the legal responsibility of Ranjeet Singh's empire which by itself was based upon the tacit mixture of diplomacy and militancy. Area West of River Indus from Peshawar down South Dera Ghazi Khan was divided into six Frontier Districts {FD} a separate force the Punjab Irregular Force {PIF} was also raised which was put under command of Punjab Government instead of a central command¹³⁵. Between 1849 - 1854 over eighteen military punitive expeditions¹³⁶ were conducted to punish the tribes for their acts of hostility that included looting of caravans and attacks on BEIC, which from tribe's perspective was nothing new.

Punjab Irregular Frontier Force {Piffer}

¹³⁵ Timothy Robert Moreman "Passing It On The Army In India & The Developmental Frontier Warfare 1849-1947", Thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, King's College, University of London. pp 20-25

¹³⁶ The Durand line, pp 244-245

The tribes of Hindu Kush which hitherto remained independent had no other means of sustenance other than plundering the plains of Punjab; they on regular intervals in mass or in small parties raided the settled areas. Sir Henry Lawrence was adamant to stop this and to establish the writ of Company and to provide protection to the subjects living under the British rule from the marauding tribesmen. He first created a force which was formed from the natives of Peshawar Vale and came to be known as Guides {in fact Peshawar Militia}. Success of Guides led to formation of a separate force the Punjab Irregular Frontier Force, under command of Punjab Government instead of Central Government at Calcutta¹³⁷. Between 1849 - 1854 over eighteen military punitive expeditions¹³⁸ were conducted by the Piffers to punish the tribes for their acts of hostility that included looting of caravans and attacks on BEIC, which from tribes' perspective was nothing new.

In 1852 the first expedition against the Wazirs was carried out then in 1859 and 1860 in 1879 an economic blockade of Wazirs was enforced and in 1881 another military expedition was conducted against them. Meanwhile Sir Robert Sandeman was able to make an inroad into the Balochistan by entering into treaties with the Marri and Bugti tribes and started moving up northwards and this led to the Forward Policy which aimed at trusting the tribes and making them responsible for their own area. Levies were introduced in which the native tribes were paid for such purpose and this gradually led to the opening of Gomal Pass and this now left only one major pass leading into India The Tochi pass and for this the negotiations started with the Wazir tribes.

First Afghan –Anglo Treaty 1855.

A treaty was signed between the John Lawrence chief commissioner of Punjab and Dost Muhammad the Walee of Kabul at Peshawar on 30th March 1855, it had three articles and it was a treaty in which both parties expressed perpetual peace and friendship, not to intervene in each other's territories and also acknowledging the sovereignty of each other over their respective areas, Dost Muhammad agreed to be an 'enemy of enemies of honourable East India Company'¹³⁹. Another treaty was signed in Peshawar on 26th January 1857, in which British agreed to pay the Dost Muhammad one lakh rupees per month for his assistance against the Persian which had captured Herat along with 4000 muskets¹⁴⁰.

AFTER 1857

the troops of the East India Company were placed under the crown the proclamation of Queen Victoria on 1st November 1858 practically ceased the existence of East India Company and its troops. The company's European troops became British regiments and artillery of three presidencies was amalgamated into Royal Artillery. In 1861 reorganisation

¹³⁷ Timothy Robert Moreman "*Passing It On The Army In India &The DevlopmentOf Frontier Warfare 1849-1947*.,Thesis submitted for the degree ofDoctor of Philosophy,King's College, University of London. pp 20-25

¹³⁸ *The Durand line* ,pp 244-245

¹³⁹ Ibid ,p 246

¹⁴⁰ Ibid 248.

was carried out under which the strength of British officers in cavalry and infantry regiments was reduced to six per battalion however the presidency system was retained but a staff corps was introduced into them. In **1861**, reorganization was carried out in army under which the strength of British officers in cavalry and infantry regiments was reduced to six per battalion however; the presidency system was retained but a staff corps was introduced into them

Calcutta 1873.

In 1873 Durand came from England and joined the Indian civil service then having a strength of 1200 men , he had passed the examination in London. It had started in 1853 and these were known as ‘competition walas’ but before 1857 the BEIC college at London used to train the civil services, Durand was impressed from Charles Aitcheson a Scotsman who was the foreign secretary then, Alfred Lyall was the home secretary, Lord Napier of Magdala was the commander in chief. Durand had unpleasant initial day at Calcutta the heat and mosquitoes were there was no electricity and only hand driven ceiling fans were the remedy. Lord Northbrook was the viceroy. Prickly heat was another major irritant for the new comers, a fiery irritating rash which covers the body and makes one’s night almost unbearable¹⁴¹. Durand found the cure by taking bath in carbolic acid soap rather had a cold bath than had lather of soap and lay down in draught on a bit of smooth Calcutta matting, sticky he went to sleep and never had a touch of prickly heat again. Durand passed his early Bengali language examination, he had to travel for hours to appear at Hoogly The examination had two parts the written and then spoken , after the written part Durand had time so he went to the garden and saw a man with his bamboo staff , he practiced his about to examine Bengali language and came to know that man’s duty was to push back the dead corpses that comes floating on Ganges . Durand had to deal with minor petty criminal cases like stealing of coconut by some one and as such learns the lower society cultural and political aspect ; he already knew the higher echelon. It must be kept in mind that Durand never went to any university but he had command of several languages including Persian, Bengali, Russian to name few. 1875 visit of Prince of Wales to India. He landed at Calcutta.

SECOND ANGLO-AFGHAN WAR 1878 -79.

In Post 1857 the War Office and politicians in London especially prime ministers Disraeli and Gladstone had varying policy on countering the Russian threat, one school of thought favoured a ‘**Forward Policy**’ which promoted an aggressive posture having British military contingents stationed as far forward as possible there by making Afghanistan a dependency of British India, the other school of thought favoured an isolationist policy¹⁴², there by rejecting the very idea of any Russian invasion to India as not practical, they considered River Indus as an viable and economical defence line¹⁴³. The policy of Lawrence

¹⁴¹ Sir Percy Sykes, *The Right Honorable Sir Mortimer Durand a biography*, Cassel & Company, London, 1926, p-29

¹⁴² Miller, *Khyber*, pp 85-86.

¹⁴³ Mujtaba ,Razvi, *The Frontiers of Pakistan, a Study of Frontiers Problem in Pakistan Foreign Policy* {National Publishing House,Karachi,1971}pp,144-145.

of Punjab in dealing with frontier has been termed as **Masterly Inactivity**. Diplomatic and military moves between the Russia and Great Britain from 1829 onwards on the Western, North Western & Northern Frontiers of Indus Valley were like a game of Chess and is termed as **Great Game**, the very term coined in 1828 and made famous by the Rudyard Kipling¹⁴⁴.

With the coming of Conservative Party in power in 1874, policy makers now adopted the forward policy. 'The Forward Policy was pursued {by new Governor General Lytton} and the tension grew... a mission under Neville Chamberlain left for Afghanistan, but on 25th August 1878 it was not permitted by the Afghan soldiers at the Khyber Pass to enter Afghanistan'¹⁴⁵.

Thus a military expedition was carried out 'to remove all anxiety about India's north western frontier... decision for war has been taken'¹⁴⁶. The war itself was a replica of first Anglo Afghan war, however reinforcement from India finally compelled the Yakub Khan {son of Sher Ali who had fled Afghanistan} the Amir of Kabul to a treaty signed at **Gandamask**, a British military camp approximately 79 miles south west of Kabul on 30th May 1879.

Despite the treaty the Afghans again revolted and scenes similar to First war were re-enacted, 'A rebellion took place and the Mission's members were killed on 3rd September 1879'¹⁴⁷. British thus concluded that without having a King in Afghanistan who is reliable to their cause and also acceptable to the Afghans, problem of Afghanistan will remain agitated, Yakub Khan was put into exile in India. The British Viceroy in India, Edward Robert Lytton Bulwer had three choices: to annex Afghanistan and declare it a part of the British Empire, to make Afghanistan a strong British ally or disintegrate Afghanistan into small independent states. All these options were rejected by London,¹⁴⁸ instead Abdur Rehman nephew of Sher Ali who had been in exile in Russia was put on throne on 22nd July 1880.

The two disastrous campaigns in Afghanistan were a logical base to expect another campaign sooner or later and in 1885 the Defence Committee contemplating the future course of action in case of third war or the intrusion by the Russian reached the conclusion that control of all passes leading to Afghanistan should be explored and kept under the control of the Crown¹⁴⁹. The tribes inhabiting the area should be made an ally with an aim that in any future conflict their loyalty will be with the British rather than with Afghanistan. The only two passes still not under the control of British were the Gomal & Tochi.

¹⁴⁴ Ibid, p 248.

¹⁴⁵ Dr Sultan-I-Rome *The Durand Line Agreement (1893): Its Pros and Cons*, on 26th January, 2011

¹⁴⁶ Durand Line, pp 110-112 also see Aslam Khattak, *A Pathan Odyssey*, {Oxford, Karachi, 2000} pp, 70-71. Also see, Muhammad Qaiser Janjua. ["In the Shadow of the Durand Line: Security, Stability, and the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan"](#). Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, pp, 66-67.

¹⁴⁷ Sultan Rome, *Durand Line* 1893, p 36.

¹⁴⁸ Abdur Rehman Khan, " http://www.1911encyclopedia.org/Abdur_Rahman_Khan

¹⁴⁹ Report on Waziristan & Its Tribes, viz the Mahsuds, Darwesh Khels, Dauris & the Bhattanis, showing our relations with the tribes to the end of March 1900 First Edition 1901 Lahore. Reprinted by Sang- E- Meel Publications, Lahore, 2005. P-2.

Sir Fredrick Roberts then Commander – in – Chief in India wrote a note in June 1887 on the necessity of opening both passes ‘There are strong reasons for a fresh departure in our policy towards the frontier tribes...sharing in our maintenance of our lines of communication...establishing with them closer relations than have hitherto existed between them and our districts in the Derajat’¹⁵⁰. The Government of India replied in August 1887 ‘The opening of country can only be affected in two ways , either by the use of military force or by endeavouring to draw the tribes into close and friendly relation with ourselves’¹⁵¹.

Abdur Rehman was a bold ruler and he tried to assert his authority over the areas which were historically under Afghanistan, for instance in 1882, Abdur Rehman laid claim to Chitral, {rejected by the British}. In 1886, his forces occupied Chageh (in Baluchistan) but the British forces uprooted and evacuated the Afghans. In 1888, he interfered in Bajour and Swat. Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, the Foreign Secretary of India, wrote to the Viceroy:

‘We are getting bad news all along the border, from the Black Mountain to the Waziri territory. The Amir is threatening Kurram, and the Afridis are in a very shaky condition.... Finally, when the Viceroy felt the need to meet with the Amir, he made an intelligent move and wrote to the Amir, “...whether you accept this offer or not, it will be necessary to decide what territory does, and what does not form part of the kingdom of Afghanistan’... Abdur Rehman resisted the mission on one pretext or the other and finally agreed to receive the British mission, under the foreign secretary of state Mortimer Durand .the main issue from Abdur Rehman’s point of view was his insistence on having the Yaghistan[Chitral, Bajaur, Swat, Dir, Chilas, and Waziris} under his influence. .’¹⁵²

BRITISH IN NORTH.

British venture into the north started in 1830 when travelers and foreign department officers disguised as saints and travelers gathered knowledge about the remote north. Names like George Hayward who was murdered in 1870 at Darkot, Mason , Burnes of Bukhara and later George Robertson who was the first British to live in kafir territory made headlines. Britain established an agency at Gilgit in 1880 with Colonel Biddulph as the political agent but it was short lived. In 1892 the Gilgit Agency was again established which also monitored the affairs in Chitral. Chitral after Colonel Lockhart was visited by Colonel Algernon Durand in 1888 and 1889. Chitral or more precisely Aman Ul Mulk played power politics, in the past Chitral had been a subject of Badakshan in a nominal manner and now Kabul asserted the same pressure. Mehtar tried to have a betrothal with Kabul but it did not took place, on the other hand when Mehtar felt threatened from Kabul he made an overture towards Kashmir in 1874 which resulted in a kind of pact between two sates linking the defence of Chitral with

¹⁵⁰ Ibid,P-3.

¹⁵¹ Ibid, Government of India letter No. 1633F dated 17th August 1887.

¹⁵² Sultan Rome, *Durand Line*, p 8, also see Azmat Hayat, *Durand Line*, pp 128-131 also see *Waziristan & Tribes 1900* p-4.

Kashmir; British were the referee; in the end Chitral came under British sphere of influence and this became a bone of contention between the Kabul and Calcutta.

1891 was another watershed year in the history of northern areas. The Nilt and Hunza valley rulers became embroiled in a clash with the British led by Colonel Durand with British and Kashmir troops under his command. In December the forts at Nilt were overcome after great dexterity shown by the troops. Chitral remained neutral in this affair; Gilgit Scouts took birth after this expedition and a permanent agency was established at Gilgit with political agent in charge. It must be kept in mind that agency was established at Gilgit but it still remained under the Kashmir control it was only in 1936 that the agency was leased by the British from Kashmir.

GOLDSMID LINE

Pakistan since independence has redrawn his old borders inherited from British India with Iran and China{Indian Borders were marked after independence on 17th August 1947}. In case of Iran{Goldsmid Line} an adjustment of area has been made in which over 310 square miles of area has been given to Iran and with China a treaty was signed in 1963 in which over 2000 square kilometers area has been adjusted by conceding it to China .

The Iranian border settlement sharply contrasted with the Pakistan's attitude towards Afghanistan, and it is logical to suspect that the cultural alienation is the key in this indifference.

Pakistan inherited almost 590 miles of border with Iran{Goldsmid Line}, British India had entered in treaty with Iran over the borders in 1871, 1896 and 1905¹⁵³, importantly the railway terminus of Zahidan was legally under the control of Pakistani government on transfer of power and soon after independence clashes took place between Pakistani and Iranian troops but were never reported in the press¹⁵⁴ a sharp contrast to the Durand Line affairs. Pakistan withdrew its passport officials 87 miles behind the border and later withdrew Chagai militia to Jozak 11 miles inside border¹⁵⁵. Later Iran bought all the property of Pakistan nationals as no foreigner is allowed to purchase land in Iran. Pakistan government also transfer Mirjawa- Zahidan sector of Pakistan Western Railways to Iranian Railways .The treaty was signed in 1958 and on 16th July 1963 the transfer of territory was completed, later opposition parties raised questions in assembly over transferring of territory to Iran, the government reply was 'it is not a fact that Pakistan had given away 3000 square miles to Iran ,we agreed to give to Iran 310 square miles of its territory which had been forcibly occupied by the British'.¹⁵⁶

¹⁵³ Razvi, Frontiers ,p205

¹⁵⁴ Ibid,p207

¹⁵⁵ Ibid,p 206

¹⁵⁶ Ibid,p209.

MacDonald-Macartney Line 1898-99¹⁵⁷,

it was also based upon the historical connections yet conforming to the reality of Great Game, small independent states like Hunza and Naltar were pressurised to sever link with the Sinkiang by giving up their claim of grazing areas in Sinkiang. Chinese also had a different point of view regarding this line, MacDonald-McCartney line marked the border from tri junction at Wakhan to Karakorum Pass in the west and from this point till the McMahon Line the area remain demarcated and open.

McMAHAN LINE

In 1914 a Chinese, Tibetan and British discuss the border issue at Simla, where political agent Sir McMahon drew the boundaries between British India & Tibet and between Tibet & China. Chinese did not agreed in totality with the proposed frontiers and left without signing the treaty but the borders with Tibet were signed. The northern areas of Kashmir including the Aksai Chin plains remained as no mans land as neither Kashmir had any historical claim over it neither the Turkmenistan/China had any, however the land route between the eastern and western end of Himalayas or between the Sinkiang and Tibet followed through Laddakh{Little Tibet}-Aksai Chin- Tibet. On the western end the frontier with China were agreed and became

British India's border from the junction at Wakhan moves east ward along the Himalayas to the jungles of Assam and Burma. The stark difference from the Durand Line is in the matter that where as in the west the British India had the administrative set up of Punjab province and as such the legal right to formulate the treaty with Afghanistan, no such set up existed on Northern side. Kashmir borders towards north{China} remained open. There were two major trade routes with East Turkestan{later became Chinese Sinkiang autonomous region} remained undefined mainly due to the geography of the area and was based upon the historical tradition and culture. Moving further east Kashmir shared frontier with the Tibet and even further east the Assam province of British India also had borders with Tibet.

Since the threat to the India was not as grave from North as it was perceived from West and North West thus this border delineation took a slow pace but nevertheless they took some shape initially in the form of an agreement with Russia in 1907 which put Tibet under Chinese sphere of influence, similar to the fate of Khanates of Central Asia.

Depiction on map remained controversial. Even before transfer of power the nationalist government of Chiang Kai Shek exchanged notes with British Indian government over the issue of northern frontiers especially showing Tibet outside the territory of China, and gradual encroachment into areas south of McMahon Line which they believed to be Chinese territory¹⁵⁸. Government of Tibet asked Indian government in October 1947 for the return of Tibetan territories including Bhutan, Sikkim and Darjeeling

¹⁵⁷ Ibid, p 98.

¹⁵⁸ Ibid, p 4

DURAND LINE

Durand Line remained the Apple of Discord between Afghanistan & British India and later with Pakistan also. There fore it is pertinent to have the full text to fully comprehend the future events. The “Durand Line Agreement” between Abdur Rehman and Sir Mortimer Durand was signed on November 12th, 1893, which formulated the formal borders between British India and Afghanistan and defined the sphere of influence especially in Waziristan.

Text of the Agreement: Whereas certain questions have arisen regarding the frontier of Afghanistan on the side of India, and whereas both His Highness the Amir and the Government of- India are desirous of settling these questions by friendly understanding, and of fixing the limit of their respective sphere of influence, so that for the future there may no difference of opinion on the subject between the allied Governments, it is hereby agreed as follow:

1. The Eastern and Southern frontier of His Highness's dominions, from Wakhan to the Persian border, shall follow the line shown in the map attached to this agreement.
2. The Government of India will at no time exercise interference in the territories lying beyond this line on the side of Afghanistan, and His Highness the Amir will at no time exercise interference in the territories lying beyond this line on the side of India.
3. The British Government thus agrees to His Highness the Amir retaining Asmar and the valley above it, as far as Chanak. His Highness agrees, on the other hand, that he will at no time exercise interference in Swat, Bajaur, or Chitral, including the Arnawai or Bashgal Valley. The British Government also agrees to leave to His Highness the Birmal tract as shown in the detailed map already given to His Highness, who relinquishes his claim to the rest of the Waziri country and Dawar. His Highness also relinquishes his claim to Chageh {Chagheh}.
4. The frontier line will hereafter be laid down in detail and demarcated, wherever this may be practicable and desirable, by joint British and Afghan commissions, whose object will be to arrive by mutual understanding at a boundary which shall adhere with the greatest possible exactness to the line shown in the map attached to this agreement, having due regard to the existing local rights of villages adjoining the frontier.
5. The above articles of agreement are regarded by the Government of India and His Highness the Amir of Afghanistan as a full and satisfactory settlement of all the principal differences of opinion which have arisen between them in regard to the frontier; and both the Government of India and His Highness the Amir undertake that any differences of detail, such as those which will have be considered hereafter by the officers appointed to demarcate the boundary line, shall be settled in a friendly spirit, so as to remove for the future as far as possible all causes of doubt and misunderstanding between the two Governments.
6. Being fully satisfied of His Highness's good will to the British Government, and wishing to see Afghanistan independent and strong, the Government of India will raise no objection to

the purchase and import by His Highness of munitions of war, and they will themselves grant him some help in this respect. Further, in order to mark their sense of the friendly spirit in which His Highness the Amir has entered into these negotiations, the Government of India undertake to increase by the sum of six lakhs of rupees a year the subsidy of twelve lakhs now granted to His Highness.¹⁵⁹

Amir Abdur Rahman had also stated that: "The province of Wakhan, which had come under my dominion, I arranged to be left under *one portion of Waziristan came under my rule, and I renounced my claims from the railway station of New Chaman, Chageh, the rest of Waziri, BulundKhel, Kuram, Afridi, Bajaur, Swat, Buner, Dir, Chilas, and Chitral* the British for protection, as it was too far from Kabul, and cut off from the rest of my country, and therefore very difficult to be properly fortified. The boundary line was agreed upon from Chitral and Baroghil Pass up to Peshawar, and thence up to Koh Malik Siyah in this way that Wakhan, Kafiristan, Asmar, Mohmand of Lalpura, and. The Amir further states that: "The misunderstandings and disputes which were arising about these frontier matters were put to an end, and after the boundary lines had been marked out according to the above-mentioned agreements by the Commissioners of both Governments, a general peace and harmony reigned between the two Governments, which I pray God may continue for ever."¹⁶⁰

Durand Line also marked the boundary of Afghanistan with China where despite the protest of Amir of Afghanistan Abdur Rehman regarding the inaccessibility and difficulty in maintaining Wakhan, a two hundred long and 60 kilometre wide strip was made part of the Afghanistan, thus a British India did not had any direct borders with Russia and Anglo-Sino frontier thus originates from this point. 'everything that happened in Kashmir between 1846 and 1947 was part in some way a product of this strategic policy',¹⁶¹

MacDonald-Macartney Line 1898-99¹⁶²,

it was also based upon the historical connections yet conforming to the reality of Great Game, small independent states like Hunza and Naltar were pressurised to severe link with the Sinkiang by giving up their claim of grazing areas in Sinkiang, Chinese also had a different point of view regarding this line, MacDonald-Mcartney line marked the border from tri junction at Wakhan to Karakorum Pass in the west and from this point till the McMahon Line the area remain demarcated and open.

¹⁵⁹ Azmat, *Durand Line*, appendix, p 244.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, pp, 134-144. Also see, Muhammad Qaiser Janjua. ["In the Shadow of the Durand Line; Security, Stability, and the Future of Pakistan and Afghanistan"](#). Naval Postgraduate School, Monterey, California, pp 79-82.

¹⁶¹ Robert Wirsing, *India Pakistan and the Kashmir Dispute*. regional conflict & its resolution, {MacMillan, London, 1994} p 186.

¹⁶² Ibid, p 98.

Chitral Siege – 1895

Chitral differs from other parts of Durand Line in a manner because the River Chitral after traversing the territory again falls back to the Afghanistan, there are 29 passes that led to Chitral from Afghanistan starting from Darwaza Pass in the north to the Arandu or Aranwali in the south. Trouble initially started with the demarcation at Asmar within Afghanistan. Umra Khan of Jandol was another key player he was the son in law of Aman ul Mulk, pathan by race he was the chief khan of Lowari Pass. After Aman's death the bloody intrigues for the Mehtarship started among the various sons of late Aman ul Mulk {he had eighteen sons} finally it was the British weight which made Afzal Ul Mulk triumphant, it was short lived as Kabul back Sher Afzal soon took the reins after bloody coup. British now backed Nizam Ul Mulk another son of late Aman ul Mulk this resulted in Sher Afzal leaving the area as he entered through **Doeah** pass back into Afghanistan. A British agent George Robertson was stationed at Chitral. He started his move in **January 1893** towards the Chitral from Gilgit with 50 men of 15th Sikh Battalion, Captain Young husband a famous traveler was his assistant along with Lieutenant Gordon and Bruce. A native by the name Abdul Hakim also accompanied the Robertson. He arrived at Chitral and established himself, he was now the British representative and his main task was to act as a listening post of on the northern gates of India.

Chitral at that time was ruled by the Mehtar, there were two distinct families based upon geography who were the ruling elite, the Khuswaqts in the upper Chitral with stronghold at Mastuj and the Kators who were living in the lower Chitral. It was a classical narrative as both had the common blood running in their veins but both trying to extend their hold. Numerous small principalities in the small valleys put their weight behind each family basing upon their chances of success. Murder was common feature to grab the power. Maharaja of Kashmir made a move and had an alliance with the Kator Shah Afzal Mehtar of Chitral against the Khuswaqts of Mastuj who were attempting to attack Gilgit with the aid of Yasin's ruler. This was the start of Kashmir getting involved into the Chitral affairs. In 1855 for a short period Chitralis occupied Mastuj but were driven out. The Khuswaqts of Mastuj had Gilgit under their control from 1848 till 1860 when Sikhs got it back after the death of Khushwaqt. On the other hand Shah Afzal Kator died in 1856 and after an intriguing episode his son Aman Ul Mulk became the Mehtar in 1857 and ruled till 1892. He is the father of modern day Chitral. He tried to unite the upper and lower Chitral, expanded his territory which included Gilgit, Ghizar & Thui and Chiga Sarai in present day Afghanistan. Khuswaqts led by Pahlwan made a venture to capture Gilgit in 1880 but in his absence Aman Ul Mulk captured Mastuj and that ends the story of Khuswaqts. Aman Ul Mulk more importantly opened up the country for the British. In 1885 the need to understand the western approaches to India were felt. The threat of Russia making an incursion through the Broghul

Pass was a distant reality. An army team led by Colonel Lockhart visited Chitral and met Mehtar Aman Ul Mulk.

The classic act of frontier romance, an mountainous kingdom besieged by the wicked ruler and tribes and held out by a brave and loyal force of natives led by British officers, few casualties, no major clash or massive bloodbath. It was after 1857 that the act of Lucknow Residency was reenacted with a happy ending, that is how Chitral Siege has gone down in the frontier history. It was different from Hunza & Nagar campaign as no Victoria Cross was awarded. It had a strategic implication had the Umra Kahn of Jandol the most able and famous of the Pathan Khans been successful in his campaign to have Chitral under his influence then the British would have received a serious dent in the Forward policy. The British officers and their escort were threatened and they timely got behind the safety of the fort. Meanwhile Umra Khan, Sher afzal and Mehtar were all gathered around the fort. The fort held out for well over a month under persistent dangers waiting for relief. The relief forces came from Gilgit and Peshawar.

Chitral state was part of Dir, Swat & Chitral Agency which comprised of vast territory of Hindukush and the border of Peshawar District and thus taken as agency of Peshawar.

In the aftermath of Chitral Siege of 1895, a new political agency was formed known as, Dir & Swat political agency with its headquarters at Malakand, Chitral was added to it a year later in 1896. Thus an assistant political officer used to manage the affairs of the Chitral; before this it was the political agency of Gilgit which was looking after the British interest in the state. It should be kept in mind that in 1891 under the Mehtar Amin ul Mulk the Chitral had agreed to hand over its foreign affairs mainly the relationship with the Afghanistan to the British.

The **Chitral Levies** were raised in 1897 by the assistant political agent at Chitral; it was his personal escort and force to implement the orders, it had a strength of 100 men. Mehtar had his own bodyguards numbering over 2000 and there was no regular army of Mehtar; there was one British army unit along with two guns which was stationed at Chitral. They had built a new fort a mile west and up of old fort which was besieged. Chitral levies thus perform the duties of border military police as well. Border military police was a system organized initially by the British after the annexation of Punjab in which originally the local tribesmen were task to perform the duty of manning the border with the tribes and mainly to stop their wrath in their own area. It was run on silladari system under which the local headmen produce the manpower and horses and get the pay as well; it was later abolished and the same tribesmen were paid directly by the state. A assistant deputy commissioner in each district except Kohat was the head of this police. By 1903 it had 2300 strength.

British garrison which was stationed at the Chitral amounted to two infantry regiments, one company of miners and sappers, one section of two guns. A line of communication was opened from Mardan through Malakand, Chakdara, Dir via Lowari to Drosh; it was the responsibility of Khan of Dir to keep it open in his area for which he was given subsidy as well. Dir Levies were raised in 1897 for this purpose they were under command of the Khan of Dir. Similarly levies were also raised at Malakand known as

Malakand Levies. This garrison was annually relieved utilizing this route. It was only in 1936 that the first ever relief using motor vehicles was utilized, the road from Chakdara was vastly improved by then still Lowari had to be crossed on foot. RAF from 1929 onwards started providing air lift and in 1937 an aerial relief was carried out in the winter when passes remained close. Chitral Levies initially had to look after the three post namely Ziarat, Mirkani and Arandu

Third Afghan War 1918.

The war itself was not focused on Chitral sector, this sector differs from all others in a sense that it is inhabited by non pathan tribes who do not share the common language with rest of combatants of the war. However purely from military geography the Amir Amanullah of Afghanistan had much more chances of success here in Chitral than anywhere else. Chitral in the summer of 1914 was a peaceful garrison, the lone infantry regiment was stationed at Drosh, Chitral Scouts itself had only one company in the summer to train with or for manning of the posts. May has been a month of almost all major events in subcontinent thus it was in May 1914 that Amir Amanullah broke his relations with British India because it had delayed in accepting his kingship and more so politically to have the public support in his favour which is so vital in country like Afghanistan and what better way than to have Jihad; tribes became electric with the prospect of an all out war against the infidel British. Mehtar of Chitral also received one such firman from Amanullah on 8th May 1914 through the military governor of Afghan Asmar province Brigadier Muhammad Usman Khan; Mehtar Shuja Ul Mulk rejected the offer and kept his side of pact with the British intact. It was a very wise step of diplomacy. Afghanistan after 1893 had carried out an all out massacre of the Red Kafir or Broghul driving them into the Chitral Kafiristan. Majority of the kafirs had accepted Islam and were known as sheikhs moreover the Kafiristan itself became Nuristan in Afghanistan. The war bugle was sounded and Chitral prepared itself for an attack of Afghanistan.

Chitral Garrison comprised of 1/11th Rajputtana Regiment with 450 bayonet strength it was commanded by Lieutenant colonel F.C.S. Samborne who was also the commander of all armed forces in Chitral which comprised apart from his regiment, a company of sappers and section of guns ex 23 mountain battery, along with 1000 scouts of Chitral; they had been called up for the service. Chitral State scouts were being commanded by Capatin Crimmin with Lieutenant byres as the sole British officer.

Chitral was divided into eight districts each under an 'aatlique' responsible for collection of revenues and also head of the local scouts, it was his responsibility to collect the men for training and sent them to the Drosh . Under every aatlique there was a 'charwelo' responsible for a group of villages within a valley, each village itself had the Baramush the head . It was the Baramush who was the first ladder of the Chitral State Scouts organization. Now these aataliques gathered the trained men . Chitral Scouts were under the political command of assistant political agent Major N.F. Reilly who started mobilizing on 5th May 1919.

Company of scouts was initially deployed at Galapach six miles downstream of Mirkani, aim was to keep an eye on the Arandu pass. Mehtar on the other hand had sent his various sons along with his body guards on various passes also. Initial Afghan movement started from 12th May onwards, they captured Arandu and soon the Scouts position at Galapach was over run by 600 strong afghans, scouts retreated to Mirkani. Afghans were certainly moving forward with an aim to capture the Mirkani and close the Lowari Pass.

Clash at Mirkani.

On 14th May Major Reilly along with two companies of Chitral State Scouts arrived at Mirkani from Drosh. The retreating scouts were also harnessed and together these three companies put up a courageous attack on the Galapach position and reoccupied it; fighting continued the whole day. In another classical display of fighting the scouts along with 50 men of Mehtar bodyguard under command Major Reilly put up another attack on the Kauti feature which was across the river and source of permanent irritation for the Galapach position the objective was achieved with in hours on 16th May. Afghan strength at Arandu was estimated to be over 600 supported by four artillery guns and a large tribal lashkar, apart from Arandu the afghans were in control of Bashgal and Birkot valleys

On 21st May 1919 in the overall plan the one company of Chitral Scouts were amalgamated with the Mehtar's bodyguard in an attack on the above mentioned positions. Two companies of Chitral Scouts under command Lieutenant Byres of Scouts pressed forward on the right bank and two companies on left bank under their commandant. Subsequently Byres moved forward , on 22nd may he had a temporary bridge thrown over the river in which the scouts were expert in doing so, byres move ahead to face Afghans at Darshot but to his dismay they had vacated the posts before his arrival.

Battle of Birkot 23rd May 1919.

Almost entire British garrison at Chitral was present at the battle of Birkot, a small town inside the Afghan province of Asmar where the bulk of Afghans were concentrated. Battle opened up on 23rd May at 0700 hours with own artillery opening up, the Rajputtana and Chitral Scouts carried out the advance and by 1400 hours the Afghans started retreating from Arandu. Afghan resisted was mainly in the form of sniping. Chitral scouts lost eight men and another 23 were wounded. After the action the afghans started reinforcing themselves thus the political administration of Chitral very wisely decided to retreat back into own areas thus the two companies of Chitral State Scouts were left at Mirkani Fort and remainder took position inside Drosh Fort along with other elements . On 3rd June 1919 the armistice was signed between the British India and Afghan government. However the situation ay Chitral remained precarious with Afghan General Wakil Khan planning to move into the Chitral thus two companies of Scouts and few men of Mehtar bodyguards wee stained at Ayun and one company was also sent to Lotkoh valley. On 17th July 1919 an Afghan attack came upon Bambouret Valley via Zantor Pass and advanced to a mile of the

Bambouret Village. Afghans had a complete control of all passes starting from Zidig Pass in the north to the Brambolu Pass in the south. Lowari Pass was also threatened by 500 odd Afghan tribesmen with menacing posture towards the Ziarat post. Lieutenant Byres with two companies of Chitral Scouts physically attacked this conglomeration of tribesmen and pushed them back. The situation in Chitral started coming back to normalcy after signing of the treaty at Rawalpindi on 8th August 1919; thus ended the first blood of Chitral State Scouts from which it emerged as a victor. Three scouts were awarded with posthumous award of Indian Order of Merit, one with Military Cross, one with distinguished Service Order and two each with Indian Distinguished Service Medal and Title of Khan Sahib.

More importantly the concept of Scouts in Chitral so different from the other militias proved a success. Unlike North Waziristan Militia and South Waziristan Militia along with Khyber Rifles where mass defection took place, there was not even one defection among the ranks of CSS. Being entirely composed of one qaum it had its own advantages which proved so good in this conflict.

FLYING IN SUBCONTINENT, AN EARLY HISTORY

Flying came quickly in Sub Continent, the world's first official airmail was carried on 18th February 1911 when French pilot Henri Piquet flew Humber biplane from Allahabad to Naiai Junction across River Jumna a distance of 5 mile with 6500 letters. The First Indian Ace, **Indra Lal Roy** was the most accomplished of all Indian pilots who flew during the First World War. Born in Calcutta on 2nd December 1898, this gallant flyer was only 16 when the war broke out in Europe. He had been a student at St. Paul's School, Kensington, London since May 1911 and left to sign up for the Royal Flying Corps as soon as he reached military age in April 1917. He was granted a commission in the service as 2nd Lieutenant. On 5th July 1917, a few months short of his 19th birthday. Five days after commissioning into the service, Roy moved to Vendrome for flying training. And after a stint at the Gunnery School at Turnberry, Roy was posted to No. 56 Squadron on 30 October 1917. Between the 6th of July and the 19th of July 1918 the 19 year old was credited with ten victories. In just over 170 hours of flight time. On the morning of 22 July 1918, three days after scoring his final victory, this gallant young man was killed in action when his plane went down in flames over Carvin during a dogfight. He was posthumously awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross on 21st September 1918, the first Indian ever so honoured two other Indians were also given commission in RFC they were HS Malik (the very first Muslim flyer of India) and Lieutenant Welinker. In 1914 a Central Flying School was established at Sitapur it was later abandoned and it joined RFC detachment at Mesopotamia in November 1914, the remainder of the School was sent to Egypt. In 1915 RFC's No. 1 Reserve Squadron formed the Nucleus of 31 Squadron which arrived at Bombay on 26th December 1915 with five BE. 2C, it's A Flight flew to Nowshera and later moved to Risalpur on 1st March 1916, in November 1916 the squadron moved to Risalpur with flights operating at various places.

END OF WW1

By the end of Great War, Royal Air Force had assume the policy of deterrent through airpower in Middle East and North Western Frontier thus further squadrons arrived in India equipped with DH-9A air craft by mid thirties there were six such squadrons. In 1918 first flight from England to India via Egypt took off on 29th November and landed at Karachi on 12th December 1918, crew consisted of Captain Ross and Major General Salrond. Peshawar, Kohat, Risalpur and Karachi were the initial air fields. Razmak (1935), Miranshah, Samungli (1922) were all constructed before the Second Great War mainly to counter the tribes as well as being part of Great Game. In 1921 a flying school was opened for a short time at Quetta equipped with Bristol and Avro 504Ks. Also on 28th March 1921 the Indian legislative passed the bill for the gradual Indianisation of armed forces.

KABUL EVACUATION

In 1929 the world's first mass evacuation of civilians took place when 549 people were evacuated from Kabul to Risalpur. Regular commercial flight from England–India was inaugurated on 30 March 1929; it used to took seven days for 4130 miles. In 1930, the year Lahore Flying Club was Opened, six Indian officers were sent to England for flying course, the first five pilots commissioned into the IAF were Harish Chandra Sircar, Subroto Mukerjee, Bhupendra Singh, Aizad Baksh Awan and Amarjeet Singh. A sixth officer, S N Tandon had to revert to ground duties as he was too short. All of them were commissioned as Pilot Officers in 1932 from RAF Cranwell. The Indian Air Force (IAF) was established with the passing of the Indian Air Force act on October 8th, 1932. Accordingly, IAF's No.1 Squadron came into being on April 1st, 1933¹⁶³ It was formed as 'A' Flight of IAF at Drigh Road Karachi; the same year Mount Everest was first flown over by Flight Lieutenant Intyre and Marquis of Clydesdale. Initially, the IAF consisted of five Indian pilots, one RAF Commanding officer, Flight Lieutenant (later Air Vice Marshal) Cecil Bouchier and four Westland Wapiti biplanes serial number J9735, K9854, K1263 and K1272. At that time there was a prerequisite of 39 inches leg length as medical standard for the pilots. Simultaneously 22 technicians were also selected as having railway work shop experience as good enough to handle aircraft, they underwent technical course at Karachi on 19 January 1932. These technicians were known commonly as 'Hawai Sepoy'. In April 1936 the B Flight was formed and A Flight was moved to Peshawar where already 20 Squadron RAF was deployed. The No. 1 Squadron later moved to Chaklala in November 1936 to join No. 5 Squadron RAF, its flights operated at Miranshah finally the squadron assembled at Ambala on 3rd July 1938, its C Flight was raised at Drigh Road Karachi in the previous month.

WW2

163

Ray Sturtivant, *Aviation News*, 24th February-8th March 1984, pp-884-889.

In September 1939 the second Great War began and expansion of Indian Air Force took place, a flying training set up was established at Risalpur. The training pattern of IAF also included an initial training of 10 weeks for the cadets at Lahore (No 1 Initial Training Wing) where they were taught drill and military discipline later it was transferred to Poona and duration was increased to 14 weeks and extended to 18 weeks in 1943. Abinitio flying training was the responsibility of No. 1 & 2 Indian Elementary Flying Training Schools located at Begumpet (Hyderabad) and Jodhpur respectively, the duration was 10-12 weeks in which ground subjects and flying training was imparted. From here the cadets would move to No. 1 Indian Flying School at Ambala where cadets initially underwent ten weeks of flying followed by twelve weeks of advanced flying training and then posted to the squadrons, civilian flying schools were also utilised for training of IAF pilots, another small initial flying set up was established at Risalpur with few Tiger Moths but it was disbanded in 1941. An armament training unit was formed at Drigh Road for providing training for pilots and observers but this was also closed in 1941 and training was shifted to Peshawar where a new No. 1 Armament Training Unit was established, a parachute training school was also established on 22nd September 1941 near Delhi at Willingdon Airport initially known as Air Landing School. Japanese attack on Burma and air raid over Calcutta forced the British to build over 200 new airfields especially in depth of India thus Dhamial, Rahwali, Gurkha, Multan, Fatehjang, Sargodha, were constructed in this back ground. In 1942 all civilian flying schools were closed and aircraft taken over for anti aircraft cooperation flying¹⁶⁴ on 1st April 1942 No 1 Operational Training School was set up at Risalpur for conversion of Hart and Lysander aircraft pilots onto Hurricanes and in November 1942 No. 152 OTU was formed at Peshawar to undertake bomber conversion, training commenced in January 1943 and by May same year the unit had 33 Venegeance and six Harvard aircraft along with six target tugs, to cater for heavy bomber training No. 1584 Conversion Flight was established at Salbini near Calcutta

Defence White Paper 1946

None influence British way of war in post WW2 as much as the first Labour premier, Mr Atlee's policy and thinking was to avoid any clash with Russian and to withdraw forces from all such areas including Middle East and India and to have a defence line across the Africa. He was the first to grasp the fragility of empire in post war era 'Its not a unit that can be defended by itself, it was the creation of sea power and with the advent of air power...empire scattered over five continents cannot be defended with a fleet based on island fortress, its gone'¹⁶⁵. Mr Atlee instead came up with the idea of having a commonwealth of Britain former colonies. Poor financial conditions of economy and social programme of his could not afford traditional strategic culture of empire and confrontation. By 1946, UK had to take a 3.75 billion \$ loan from USA, yet UK was the highest spender on defence surpassing even USA.

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Ibid.

¹⁶⁵ Olav Riste, ed , *Western Security the Formulative Years 1947-1953*{New York; Coloumbia University Press,1985},p.32.

It was in these backgrounds of ideology and economics that Labour announced the forthcoming independence to India in 1947 and later to Burma as well. Military did not agreed with the prime minister and in January 1947 the three chiefs stressed the retention of Middle East bases and influence, the other bone of contention was the shortage of manpower and on both these issues the three chiefs threatened to resign¹⁶⁶ ,.

TRANSFER OF POWER 1947

From 1920 onwards Indians were inducted in army with a King Commission and six Indians were initially selected including Sikander Mirza the future Pakistani president. The role of Punjab in World war 2 is highly commendable as no less than six Victoria Crosses were awarded to Punjabis and Pathans ,none was given to any Sindhi or Baluchi. During the Pakistan Movement era{The very resolution was passed at Lahore in 1940}the Punjab and Frontier provinces remained loyal to the British and Muslim League was only able to made governments at Bengal and Sindh.

Lord Mountbatten the last viceroy of India announced the plan on 3rd June 1947¹⁶⁷ and later in a press conference highlighted his plan of transfer of power which he advanced from June 1948 to August 1947, the independent states that included Kashmir and Jammu state had the option of either joining either dominion or remain independent, however the last option of any state was never seriously considered and all princely states were expected to join. There were no conditions on the ruler regarding his choice of accession ,it was presumed that logic would prevail upon all and these rajas will follow the rule of majority thus Muslim majority state of J&K to join Pakistan and Hindu majority states of Hyderabad and Junnagarh to join India in all the cases cited the rulers were from minority

On 27 June 1947, Lord Mountbatten circulated a memo for Quaid e Azam and Mr Liaquat Ali, highlighting the division of military assets, according to it in the first stage all the Muslims and non Muslims units were to be repatriated from Pakistan and India by September 1947, Artillery units were to be repatriated by November. An Armed forces Reinstitution Committee was formed to settle the issue of military hardware. The task of bifurcating RAF and aviation related equipment was assigned to the air force sub-committee headed by Air Vice Marshal Perry Keene Who later became RPAF first chief. Distribution was done meticulously for instance there was only one Air OP squadron in the Indian Sub-Continent i.e. 659 Air OP Squadron. It was decided to split this squadron. One flight consisting of four Auster V aircraft was Pakistan's share, remaining squadron was to form part of Indian Military. On independence Pakistan share of artillery regiments were eight Gun regiments, one survey battery and one Air OP Flight¹⁶⁸. These eight regiments were grouped under three artillery groups.

¹⁶⁶ David Devereux, *The Formulation of British Defence Policy towards Middle East 1848-1956*{London,Macmillian,1990}p.45.

¹⁶⁷ *Partition Of Punjab Official Papers* ,pp 45-65.

¹⁶⁸ Major General Fazal Muqem Khan *The Story of Pakistan Army*, {Oxford,1963},pp,20-35.also see Major General Shoukat Riza *The Pakistan Army 1947-1949*{Services Book Club,Rawalpindi,1989}.pp-128-201.also see

INDIAN ACT OF INDEPENDENCE 1947, was passed by the British Parliament on 18th July 1947, it had an impact on the Tochi Valley and Tochi Scouts because of clauses dealing with tribes & Durand Line issue, it states.

‘there lapse also any treaties or agreements in force at the date of the passing of this Act between His Majesty and any persons having authority in the tribal areas, any obligations of His Majesty existing at that date to any such persons or with respect to the tribal areas, and all powers, rights, authority or jurisdiction exercisable at that date by His Majesty in or in relation to the tribal areas by treaty, grant, usage, sufferance or otherwise’¹⁶⁹.

In simple words all the obligations and treaties including the payment of allowances in North Waziristan ceased to exist, the treaty with Daur Tribes of 1895 also terminated, there was nothing clear regarding the status of Durand Line and this fog remains in air for some time. The International Law in Article 62 of the Vienna Convention, on the Law of Treaties states, *"It is accepted by all that whenever a new country or state is carved out of an existing colonial dominion; all the international agreements and undertakings that the previous ruler of the region had entered into would be transferred to the new independent national government."*¹⁷⁰

Communal riots had already started in India from 1946 onwards but from March – April 1947 they erupted in Frontier Region, the most affected town was Tank, where Mahsuds & Bhattanis had a field day, city was put under curfew. Tochi Scouts saved Bannu City from the wrath of tribesmen. Tochi Scouts provided refuge to all Hindus, Tochi Scouts had a Hindu as canteen contractor and as transport contractor since inception.

The British officers present in Sub Continent were given a choice of either joining the Pakistan or the India¹⁷¹. Both dominions had a shortage of trained manpower and administrators to run the new dominions. The number of British officers who opted for service with Pakistan was far more than those who opted for India. There is a general theory that British favoured Hindus more than the Muslims, it is unfounded and not based upon the facts and reality. The hard fact is that British had much more cordial relations with Muslims than with Hindus; one key factor for this is the fact that both are believers of books. In North Waziristan and for that matter everywhere in India it were Muslims who were the martial race, the fighting men, men of status, people who readily gave their blood for their own honour, straight forward and simple, neat and clean.

First Kashmir War

Kashmir, in Sanskrit, implies land desiccated from water: “ka” (the water) and shimeera (to desiccate) Kashmir a land locked Himalayan kingdom comprising of 86000 square kilometres a that includes from the west where it borders with Afghanistan at an

Brian Cloughley *A History of Pakistan Army Wars & Insurrections 2nd edition*, {Army Education Publishing House Rawalpindi, 2002}, pp, 2-9.

¹⁶⁹[http://www.legislation.gov.uk/Indian Independence Act 1947](http://www.legislation.gov.uk/Indian%20Independence%20Act%201947). Also see The Times, 4th July 1947.

170. Treaties”. United Nations. Accessed on 26th January 2011. <http://www.un.org/law/ilc/texts/treaties.htm>
171 Shaikat Riza Major General the Pakistan Army 1947 – 1949, pp., 145 -175.

altitude of over 7000 feet ,where Hunza state a predominantly Shia Muslim of Agha Khan sect also marks the boundary with Chinese Sinkiang province and runs over the extreme wilderness ,a mass of mountains that include K-2 the second highest peak in the world and over the Broad Peak, Hidden Peak both over 8000 meters high, the world's largest glaciers out side polar region namely Siachen is also in the path of this imaginary line that also runs over the Aksai Chin plateau, Laddakh and moving further east it finally merges with the low land Himalayan mountain that veers off at Punjab ,its southern edges are the very edges of the mountain range that separates the agriculture based Punjab from the hilly Kashmir .that thus extends from this crescent edge that is the life line of both the Moen o Daro and Harappa civilisations that flourished on the very first western river the Mighty Indus ,on whose banks as it gushes down into Soan Civilisation, the very heart of the Buddhist empire of Asoka at Taxila close to Rawalpindi

In 1935 British India and Maharaja Harri Singh signed a lease under which Gilgit Agency {including Hunza} was taken on 60 years lease by the Raj, the Gilgit Scouts were already raised in 1915,consisting of local natives {six hundred in number} commanded by the British officers and mainly funded by the J&K state. The only two routes from India to China passes through Kashmir, the most easterly is the Jammu from Katoha in the Gurdaspur District, rail link goes from Sialkot to Jammu and from here the movement towards Srinagar is possible in fair weather due to intervening Banihal Pass, the most common route is from Rawalpindi along River Jhelum to Srinagar and then to Gilgit via Bunji and onwards to China

Kashmir had evolved its own distinct political system which was not much different from the other states of its size like Hyderabad Deccan yet due to its strategic location and ethnic distribution Kashmir state was unique in India, the first political party in Kashmir was formed in 1931 when a serious riots broke out in Kashmir¹⁷² over a mosque issue the crisis ended with over thirty rioters being shot dead, the two main political parties were National Congress which was ideologically closed to Indian Congress it was led by Sheikh Abdullah who had a master's degree in chemistry from Aligarh College he became a focal point in Kashmir politics he remained in and out of Maharaja's prison on quite a regular basis, Sheikh was initially employed as a school headmaster but his marriage with a rich family made politics rather easy for him, sheikh had rather liberal views about the religion and communal issues in a sense he was a combination of both Jinnah and Nehru,he was the youngest of the three.

Muslim conference was the other major political party that became politically aligned with Jinnah's Muslim League .Kashmir political system in 1947 was autocratic in nature with a prime minister heading the cabinet, all powers remained in the hands of the Maharajah, State had its own well equipped army and civil service, the observation of the travellers and government officials was very poor about the human rights in the state¹⁷³ especially the plight of the Muslim population, but keeping in view the geography, history, economy of the state there seems to be little options available to the rulers. Kashmir had two general elections in which through a complicated system of voting and nomination an elected legislative

¹⁷² Lamb ,Kashmir Disputed Legacy,p,89.

¹⁷³ Ibid,p,87

assembly of Kashmir was in sitting. The logical perception of all the leaders especially the Muslims was absolutely correct to look forward in having state of Jammu and Kashmir as part of Pakistan.

The attitude of Mountbatten towards the Kashmir in those critical days is still under research, he was certainly conscious of the strategic value of Kashmir basing upon his 3rd June plan there is no reason not to believe that he {Mountbatten} must be convinced that Kashmir is going to Pakistan. For the demarcation of the area {Punjab and Bengal} a boundary commission was set up under Sir Cyril Radcliffe a prominent lawyer, his mandate was 'To demarcate the boundaries on the general principles of Muslim and non Muslim population and keeping other factors'.¹⁷⁴ ¹⁷⁵

KASHMIR DID NOT ACCEDED to any of the dominion and signed a standstill pact with Pakistan to ensure that all services operate as per routine, all the economic related activities had to be generated through Pakistan that include postal, banking, insurance, fuel, food and spares for the machinery. It further strengthened the Pakistani perception of Kashmir's logical accession. Politically Kashmir was agitated, Sheikh Abdullah was imprisoned and his political party had boycotted the elections held in 1945-46. The Muslim Conference took part and had a majority in the legislative assembly of the state. From July onwards there was an unrest in the state which is quite predictable as the people of Kashmir especially the Muslims looked forward to joining the Pakistan, on the other hand it seems quite probable that maharajah was seriously thinking of maintaining its independence, he was convinced that his any form of survival at the power is best assured only in his being independent. Sir Harri Singh is not to be blamed for adopting this stance, from his perceptive nothing new has happened rather the only check on his total autocratic rule in the form of British Resident will not be seen any more, the paramountcy of Raj will be vanished and nothing more than that has occurred as far as Kashmir is concerned. Among all the states Kashmir was the only major state that had a strategic geographical location and importance; it borders with Sinkiang province of China and Eastern Turkmenistan both predominating Muslims..

. There were over 550 states in India and majority of them had sign the accession to the India and Pakistan. The independent states that included state of Kashmir and Jammu had the option of joining either dominion or remain independent; however the last option was never seriously considered. There were no conditions on the ruler regarding his choice of accession, it was presumed that logic would prevail upon all and these rajas will follow the rule of majority thus Muslim majority state of J&K to join Pakistan and Hindu majority states of Hyderabad and Junagarh to join India; in the end they all defied logic. For the demarcation of the area {Punjab and Bengal} a boundary commission was set up under Sir Cyril Radcliffe

¹⁷⁴ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk> *Indian Independence Act 1947* {accessed on 3rd November 2010} also see Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema *The Politics of the Punjab Boundary Award working Paper No 1, September 2000, {University of Heidelberg}*

¹⁷⁵ Discussions of The Kashmir Dispute in The Security Council *Security Council Official Records Third Year 6th January 1948-29th December 1949* {Lake Success, New York} p.43.

a prominent lawyer, his mandate was ‘to demarcate the boundaries on the general principles of Muslim and non-Muslim population and keeping other factors’.¹⁷⁶

Radcliffe Award was announced on 17th August 1947 a Muslim majority district Gurdaspur was awarded to India, immediately it further fuelled the already explosive communal atmosphere, trains of Muslim refugees were burnt, looted, raped, killed and abducted in Sikh states adjoining the Pakistan in East Punjab especially the Patiala¹⁷⁷. The tribes of Waziristan rushed to the help of their brethren; they were helped by the Tochi Scouts in term of logistics.

Delay in accession and grant of Muslim majority tehsils of Gurdaspur to India that allowed it to maintain a rail and road link with Kashmir were now propagated by the Pakistani press as a conspiracy against Muslims,¹⁷⁸ it is at this point in history that ever lasting suspicious and mistrust between Muslims and white Christians took birth and within days became a monster that thwarted any effort on part of British to interfere and restore the balance of power in sub continent.

*A public meeting was held in August 1947 at Nila Bat, a village near Dhirkot, to support the demand for accession of the state to Pakistan. The Maharaja sent his Hindu Dogra forces to quell the unrest. They opened fire on the gathering. On August 27, Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan, a local zamindar or landowner (and later President of the “Azad Kashmir” government in Pakistani-controlled Kashmir), led an attack on a police-cum-military post in Dhirkot and captured it, leading the Maharaja to unleash the full force of his Dogra Hindu troops on the population. This effectively drew the lines in Poonch between the Hindu ruler and the Muslims population, all of whom were now seen as enemies. Villages were attacked and burned*¹⁷⁹

The men of Poonch who were part of the British Forces in second world war were now demobilised and after years of military activity were now keen to take part in any action ,moreover a state of anarchy prevailed in Kashmir vale. Political and diplomatic efforts were launched by both the dominions to persuade Kashmir to join them, Pakistan took it as its right that Kashmir has no other option but to be a part of it for survival, India especially the idealistic Nehru was initially moved by the nostalgia of his home place{he was a Kashmiri Hindu pundit} and simultaneously the importance of Kashmir for the future prosperity of India became apparent, Mountbatten who was supposed to be the governor general of both dominions was publicly humiliated by Mr Jinnah who opted to be the governor general of Pakistan himself, fourth person was Sheikh Abdullah another idealist who wanted a rather free Kashmir and he had a popular base as well, Maharaja Sir Hari Singh the very man who

¹⁷⁶ <http://www.legislation.gov.uk> Indian Independence Act 1947 {accessed on 3rd November 2010} also see PervaizIqbalCheema*The Politics of the Punjab Boundary Award working Paper No 1, September 2000,{University of Heidelberg}*

¹⁷⁷ Discussions of the Kashmir Dispute in The Security Council *Security Council Official Records Third Year 6th January 1948-29th December 1949* {Lake Success, New York} p.43.

¹⁷⁸ Ibid,p,3. Indian delegate’s speech on 6th January 1948

¹⁷⁹ Shuja Nawaz *First Kashmir War Revisited* India Review, Volume 7, No.2, April – June 2008, pp.115 – 154.

held the decisive card wanted his reign to be safeguarded was the fifth actor of this historical dramas, in his analysis he had a better chance with India.

Chain of Events

Two events simultaneously took place, the Kashmir and the withdrawal of army from Frontier 'Operation Curzon' and they both created chaos. From the tribesmen perspective both seems to be an extension of each other, from the state point of view both were separate. But this was the first time in modern period that tribesmen's strategic value for Pakistan was highlighted.

Pakistan relied upon the tribesmen to capture the Srinagar; on 4th October 1947 a Republic of Kashmir¹⁸⁰ was proclaimed at Rawalpindi's Hotel Paris. On 23rd October 1947 the tribesmen were twenty odd miles away from the capital Srinagar, the lone power house was destroyed, the Wazir tribesmen were as savage on the non-Muslim population of Kashmir as they were on them in Tochi Valley, killing European women; they were **nun**¹⁸¹s. On 26th October Maharaja signed his accession agreement with India which was accepted conditionally by the Mountbatten. Indian Forces started pouring in the Valley¹⁸².

OPERATION CURZON

Government of India had principally decided in February 1947 to **withdraw** all the regular forces from Waziristan¹⁸³, later Quaid I Azam as a sign of goodwill gesture towards the tribes also endorsed the same policy. Warning Orders for Operation Curzon were issued on 1st October 1947 and all regular army posts were vacated by the end of the year, which included Mir Ali, Razmak, Wana, Gardaí and Damdil. For the tribes this was a god send opportunity to carry out the loot. Withdrawal of the army was not an easy affair and it was performed with a professional incision. Tochi Scouts provided the road protection and acted as rear guard. Tochi Scouts also had to abandon the posts at Datta Khel, Khar Kamar, Tut Narai, Razmak and Boya; which were burnt and stripped by the tribesmen, taking away everything and anything that they could lay their hands on. Even today while travelling on road MiranShah to Datta Khel one comes across many old houses which have steel girders stolen from these posts. RPAF aircraft were used for evacuation of casualties and for guiding the army guns in a rear guard action.¹⁸⁴ Field Marshall Ayub Khan who remained President of Pakistan {1958-1969} was commanding a brigade at Gardaí and said '*that but for an odd attempt or two to 'booby trap' his men here and there by Ipi's hostile men the operation went*

¹⁸⁰ Alastair, Lamb. *Incomplete Partition the Genesis of the Kashmir Conflict 1947-1948*{Services Book Club, 1999} p, 135.

¹⁸¹ *The Times*, Saturday 25th October 1947.also see *The New York Times*, November 24th 1948.

¹⁸² *The Times*, Tuesday, October 28th 1947.

¹⁸³ Douglas Marsh *Ramparts of Empire, India North Western Frontier 1919-1947* , unpublished Thesis, University of Austin, 2009, p- 263., also see Lieutenant Colonel H.E.M.Cotton, *Operation Curzon-Evacuation of Waziristan*, *Royal Engineers Journal*, 62,{1948},pp.183-196. Also see Pakistan Army 1947-1949, p- 257.

¹⁸⁴ Azam, Cheema, Hamdani, *History of Pakistan Army Aviation 1947-2007*{Army Press, Islamabad, 2007} pp. 2-13.

*off smoothly as planned.*¹⁸⁵ RPAF came to the rescue of army, two squadrons were in support, and No.5 Squadron flew 47 sorties, carrying out strafing over the tribesmen. Siddiqui further recalls "There was no clear cut job defined, we all were motivated to work, work and work to make this country survive, I would fly in my own squadron as well in Air OP. we would fly the Air force crew from Peshawar to Razmak, fly political agents, and any other task given, Before flying from Peshawar we inform the army units of our arrival and also get the weather, Auster had wireless to communicate."

Operation Curzon terminated on 31 December 1947, The flight supported the operation with dedication and devotion and flew 115 hours. On completion of the duty, the flight assembled at Peshawar, meanwhile the Indian intrusion in Kashmir started, at that time it would take 8-10 hours to drive from Rawalpindi to Kotli, 7 div was commanded by Maj-Gen Tottenham, he requested for Air operation sortie during an informal dinner, he was then provided with it ,it took 30 minutes to reach kotli in a fresh frame of minds.

Thus independence changed the things very little in the Tochi Valley and for Tochi Scouts the life went as it was before. 'No one who has ever read a page of Indian History will prophesy about the Frontier'. {Lord Curzon}

KASHMIR WAR

Kashmir War was a convoluted affair, in which Pakistan Army was not taking part officially because of international law and the fact that all the services were being commanded by the British Officers and Kashmir issue was already put in Security Council on 3rd January 1948, however a covert operation was planned and put into action under the leadership of 'General Tariq' his Nome de plume, he was Colonel Akbar Khan¹⁸⁶ he was serving in Pakistan Army's General Headquarters Rawalpindi as director of weapons and equipment. He was approached by a young Kashmiri by the name of Sardar Ibrahim, who requested for rifles and ammunition. The number of rifles requested were only 500.

*'time for peaceful negotiations was gone because every protest was being met with repressions and, therefore, in certain areas the people were virtually in a state of revolt . . . if they were to protect themselves and to prevent the Maharajah from handing them over to India, they needed weapons'*¹⁸⁷

General Messervy the commander-in- chief was in picture and held the similar view. General Tariq was a unit officer of Lieutennat Colonel Sadiqullah Khan who was commanding the Tochi Scouts at Tochi Valley and both met accidentally at General Headquarters Rawalpindi¹⁸⁸ . The end result was that Tochi Scouts were committed to the Kashmir Cause for the reason that they being a civil armed force did not come under the international law of intervention.

¹⁸⁵ Captain A.R. Siddiqui {correspondent of Civil & Military Gazette} quoting Brigadier Ayub Khan, article published on 5th February 2005, in Dawn Newspaper.

¹⁸⁶ Shuja Nawaz, *The First Kashmir War Revisted*, India Review, Vol 7, No.2, April-June 2008, pp.115-154.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸⁸ *Guardian of Frontier*, p-163.

Colonel Akbar Khan also met Colonel Musa Khan{ later General} who was the grade one officer in Lahore Area which had the sphere of responsibility extending from Multan in the south to the Chenab in west. This meeting took place on 10th October 1947, resultantly Musa covertly sent weapons. *‘ without the Area Commander’s permission, I instructed Lieutenant Colonel Khalid Jan commandant of one of our infantry battalion to send four detachments to Rawalpindi, whence they would be taken to their destination. Ostensibly the crew were to proceed on leave to cover their absence from unit...the bren gunners reached Rawalpindi same night accompanied by battalion subedar – major’*¹⁸⁹

The action plan thus focused on severing two major routes that linked Kashmir to India: first, the Kathua–Jammu route, an unmetalled road that passed through “broken territory” where guerrilla action could hold up any traffic till the rains and winter snows made it impassable. Second, the aim was to make Srinagar airport, the terminus for the likely air supply route from India, unavailable to Indian planes.¹⁹⁰

INSTRUMENT OF ACCESSION

(Text of signed by Maharaja of the State of Jammu & Kashmir on 26th day of October 26, 1947, and its acceptance by Lord Mountbatten, the Governor General of India, on October 27, 1947) Whereas, the Indian Independence Act, 1947, provided that as from the fifteenth day of August 1947, there shall be set up an independent dominion known as INDIA, and that the Government of India Act, 1935, shall, with such omissions, additions, adaptations and modifications as the Governor-General may by order specify, be applicable to the dominion of India. And whereas the Government of India Act, 1935, as so adapted by the Governor-General provides that an Indian State may accede to the Dominion of India by an Instrument of Accession executed by the Ruler thereof. Now, therefore, I Shriman Indar Mahandar Rajrajeshwar Maharajadhiraj Shri Hari Singhji, Jammu Kashmir Naresh Tatha Tibbet adi Deshahhipathi, Ruler of Jammu and Kashmir State, in the exercise of my sovereignty in and over my said State do hereby execute this my Instrument of Accession and I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of India with the intent that the Governor-General of India, the Dominion Legislature, the Federal Court and any other Dominion authority established for the purposes of the Dominion shall, by virtue of this my Instrument of Accession but subject always to the terms thereof, and for the purposes only of the Dominion, exercise in relation to the State of J&K (hereinafter referred to as ‘this State’) such functions as may be vested in them by or under the Government of India Act, 1935, as in force in the Dominion of India, on the 15th day of August 1947 (which Act as so in force in hereafter referred to as “the Act”). I hereby assume the obligation of ensuring that due effect is given to the provisions of the Act within this State so far as they are applicable therein by virtue of this my Instrument of Accession. I accept the matters specified in the Schedule hereto as the matters with respect to, which the Dominion Legislature may make laws for this State. I hereby declare that I accede to the Dominion of India on the assurance that if an

¹⁸⁹ Jawan to General, p – 79.

¹⁹⁰ First Kashmir War Revisited.

agreement is made between the Governor-General and the Ruler of this State whereby any functions in relation to the administration in this State of any law of the Dominion Legislature shall be exercised by the Ruler of this State, then any such agreement shall be deemed to form part of this Instrument and shall be construed and have effect accordingly. The terms of this my Instrument of Accession shall not be varied by any amendment of the Act or of the Indian Independence Act, 1947, unless such amendment of the Act or of the Indian Independence Act 1947, unless such amendment is accepted by me by an Instrument supplementary to this Instrument. Nothing in this Instrument shall empower the Dominion Legislature to make any law for this State authorizing the compulsory acquisition of land for any purpose, but I hereby undertake that should the Dominion for the purposes of a Dominion law which applies in this State deem it necessary to acquire any land, I will at their request acquire the land at their expense or if the land belongs to me transfer it to them on such terms as may be agreed, or, in default of agreement, determined by an arbitrator to be appointed by the Chief Justice of India. Nothing in this Instrument shall be deemed to commit me in any way to acceptance of any future constitution of India or to fetter my discretion to enter into arrangements with the Government of India under any such future constitution. Nothing in this Instrument affects the continuance of my sovereignty in and over this state, or, save as provided by or under this Instrument, the exercise of any powers, authority and rights now enjoyed by me as Ruler of this State or the validity of any law at present in force in this State. I hereby declare that I execute this Instrument on behalf of this State and that any reference in this Instrument to me or to the Ruler of the State is to be construed as including a reference to my heirs and successors. Given under my hand this 26th day of October, Nineteen Hundred and Forty Seven.

Acceptance of Instrument of Accession of Jammu and Kashmir State by the Governor General of India I do hereby accept this Instrument of Accession. Dated this Twenty-Seventh day of October Nineteen Hundred and Forty-Seven. (Sd). Lord Mountbatten Governor General of India

TOCHI SCOUTS

Commandant Tochi Scouts offered a strong company of 200 Scouts. **This Scouts company was the first Scout assistance that was rendered to the cause of Kashmir by the Pakistan**. Tochi Company went via Peshawar to Rawalpindi and from there one contingent of two platoons under Havildar Mardan were transported to the Muzaffarabad - Chakoti - Uri - Srinagar Axis. The rest of the contingent under Subedar Hamid Gul was transported to Jhelum from where they entered into foray, sniping the road Naoshehra – Rajaori which was the first contour of communication moving up from the plains towards Srinagar, where Indians were threatening to concentrate.

‘ Indian forces had fought a pitched battle against the raiders {Pakistani} at Naoshehra, who gave the Indians an opportunity to use their heavy weapons and there by inflict heavy casualties ...2000 dead out of tribal force of 15000’¹⁹¹.

¹⁹¹ Ibid, p-17.

Subedar Hamid Gul was happy to be here, it was the first time in his service where the enemy was not shrouded, and it was the enemy which he has been looking for. Infidel, idol worshipper, men not worthy of being called as men, a culture corrupt to the core, Hindu women who are slave of phallus, worshipper of Shiva. Hamid Gul had no mercy for such a race, he was blood thirsty. 15 years of service in Tochi scouts he had been a gentleman, abiding by the Riway and laws of warfare. Frontier Warfare was not based upon ideology at least from the Tochi Scouts perspective, the force was never used more than what was required, extermination of people or conquest of territory on which the warfare revolves around are not applicable in North Waziristan. This point was misunderstood during the 1919 and 1936 campaigns. Tochi scouts had to live with the tribes and to make them also live in peace thus force is selective in nature but here it was an open war; Hamid Gul was free to hunt the Hindus.

Tochi Scouts were employed for conducting ambushes which they preferred to call it ‘Chapao’ on the Naoshehra – Bhimber and Naoshehra – Rajauri road and in March 1948 were involved in the defence of Jhangar.

Hamid Gul had two successful ‘Chapao’ one at Pir Badesar and other near Chingas. He avoided pitch battle, mere hit and run and hit again. Causing delay and fear among the Hindus. He once had to wait for over four hours in cold to snipe at a Hindu soldier. He is credited with making home-made mines which he planted on the road.

Chakoti & Subedar Hamid Gul

Tochi Scouts company was transferred to the defence of Chakoti, as part of 101 Infantry Brigade which was responsible for the defence of Jhelum Valley Tochi company was attached with 5/12 FF, 4/10 Baluch and also with 1/13 FF. In May 1948 the Indians had two infantry divisions, No.19 Infantry Division which was the old Srinagar Division & No.26 Infantry division the old Jammu Division. Tochi Scouts had the No.19 Division as the opponent with it two brigades No. 161 & 163 Brigades but mainly it was the latter. The Pakistani commander was Brigadier Akbar Khan {Brigadier Sher Khan had now assumed the Nomen de Plume of General Tariq}.

From 20th May 1948 the action starts when Indian launched their attack. Subedar Gul along with twenty other sepoy was on a patrol rather ‘Gasht’ on 25th May 1948, between Chakoti and Urusa. Hamid Gul and his platoon encountered the Indians; after a pitch battle Subedar Hamid Gul and Sepoys Arsala Khan, Muhammad Khan, Naik Jamroz & Lance Naik Fazal Shah all embraced shahadat. On 31st May, Havildar Mardan & Sepoy Mirza Mir also attained shahadat due to enemy artillery fire, on 27th /28th June Sepoy Mehboob Shah also expired due to battle wounds. Sepoy Said Hasan died due to mine blast in 1949 days before the cease fire.¹⁹²

Pakistan Army did not employ Auster aircraft in the Kashmir campaign that lasted from November 1947-June 1948 however Indians did made use of their Austers. An Independent Operational Flight (IAF) was raised with five Auster Mark 5 aircraft and four pilots operating from Naushera where a strip was made ‘routine shelling and counter

¹⁹² Tochi Scouts, Official Record, MiranShah.

bombardment was established on very gentlemanly terms...mealtimes were taboo¹⁹³ Other strips used by the flight included Sambha, Jhunger, Akhnur and later Rajori which was a Dakota strip also, all these strips were within the mortar and machine gun range of Pakistan Army which accounted for at least one aircraft and one pilot 'previous pilots did some cheeky flying taking operational risks ending in pilot and aircraft casualty'.¹⁹⁴ Indian Austers were troubled by the Pakistani anti aircraft guns which on many occasions put a hole in them and forced them to change their flying tactics, flying was in mountains which also included crossing over at 9000 feet Banihal Pass, pilots also carried battle casualties in Auster by making use of a Pakistani Harvard's fuselage reportedly downed by the Indians. The Indian Air Op also faced the similar dilemma of the ground commander's discipline issue where the pilots attire was disliked 'corps commander a Sandhurst type disliked my flying get-up...my gunner beret, my fawn creepers and never discarded flying suit worn even on formal luncheon for him at forward posts'.¹⁹⁵ Krishna also highlights the human nature of senior army officers especially their fear of flying, he wrote that his divisional commander would cancel a sortie with propeller's running for no reason, later the same commander died in a jeep accident, in another sortie the corps commander dropped his operational orders out of Auster and was lucky that his top secret orders bag strap just wrapped around his wrist, commander was trying to stop the freezing air flow through his thick bag. Krishna later commanded the Kashmir Flight and also the squadron, he talks very high of his pilots who all became senior brigadiers and major generals, one holds Maha Vir Chakar and five others Vir Chakra.

FUNDAMENTAL OF PAKISTAN'S MILITARY STRATEGY

In April 1948 new Pakistan Army Chief General Douglas Gracey committed Pakistan Army to the defence of the country and to put a stop to the Indian threat towards the Jhelum Bridges, by stopping the Indian advance not beyond Uri-Poonch-Naushehra line. His appreciation even today stands as the fundamental of Pakistan's military strategy

*'If Pakistan is not to face another serious refugee problem...if India is not to be allowed to sit on the doorsteps of Pakistan to the rear and on the flank...if the civilian and military morale is not to be affected to an dangerous extent and if subversive political forces are not to be encouraged and let loose within Pakistan itself, it is imperative that the Indian Army is not allowed to advance beyond the general line Uri – Punch – Naushehra'*¹⁹⁶

193 Ibid.

194 Ibid.

195 There is no such thing as a formal lunch in the field especially in war but the British Army culture adopted by the Dominions reflects the core difference between the RAF flying culture and army insistence on formality even amidst enemy fire.

¹⁹⁶ Pakistan Army 1947-49, p – 275.

Fakir of Ipi was the now thorn in the bouquet of Pakistan because of his interpretation of the independence, his attention was towards the political issue regarding the Durand Line. He now became a tool in the hands of the Afghanistan, which wanted to repudiate the Durand Line.

Forward Policy was another cause, the policies do not simply die down with transfer of power rather they are a living thing because they affects the lives of living humans, Russian fear was a reality and a genuine thing, cold war had started and British could not leave the area just like that. Pakistan from its inception or even before that was a pro-western country, in other words it was anti-communist. Quaid I Azam read the congratulatory message of the American President in the constituent assembly, the very first country to send its felicitations. Pakistan was part of an international conglomerate which was pro democratic and anti-communist. From Pakistan's perspective the country has not only inherited the treaties signed by the British but also the undeclared and unsigned Great Game; it became Pakistan's game now.

OPERATION DATTA KHEL

On 3rd November 1947 at Gilgit where the 600 strong Gilgit Scouts along with their commandant Major Brown a British officer rebelled against the Kashmir government¹⁹⁷ and as the lease had expired after the transfer of power, Gilgit and Laddakh including Skardu were now again part of the Kashmir. This is probably the only incident of any British officer in one hundred and fifty years in India to become a rebel against his own very own superiors, the military forces of both dominions was placed under Field Marshall Auckinleck and all commanders of Pakistan and Indian armed forces were British thus this act of Major Brown supports the hypothesis of British safeguarding their strategic interests in Central Asia, against communism through Pakistan as Major Brown soon announced the accession of Gilgit with Pakistan. Gilgit Scouts thus became the nucleus around which the Gilgitis, Baltis, Chilas {all Muslims} attacked Sikh garrison at Bunji and Skardu capturing Kargil there by cutting the lone Himalayan communication link between Kashmir and Laddakh. This war was independent of the resistance that was being waged all along the Kashmir's border with Pakistan

Tochi Scouts had this unique honour that the very operation which changed the geo-strategic position of Kashmir for ever was carried out by an officer who had served in Tochi Scouts and aptly named as 'Operation Datta Khel¹⁹⁸'. Captain William Brown served in Tochi Scouts 1946-1947 in No .2 & No 1. Wing, he spent almost a month at Datta Khel. Brown was commissioned in a Frontier Force Regiment in 1941, transferred to SWS , served in Gilgit Scouts , came back to Tochi Scouts and then to Chitral Scouts and finally took the command of Gilgit Scouts after resigning his King's Commission. He planned the operation

¹⁹⁷ Alastair, Lamb, *Kashmir Disputed Legacy* ,p,161

¹⁹⁸ Major William Brown, *the Gilgit Rebellion*, {Ibex, Rawalpindi, 1998} p- 117. Also Victoria Schofield *Kashmir in Conflict; India, Pakistan & the unending War* {London, Taurus, 2010} p-63.

on the instigation of Lieutenant Colonel Bacon who remained as political Agent in NWA and was the Inspecting Officer of Frontier Corps in 1947, the Governor of NWFP George Cunningham also served as the political agent at NWA and the very first political agent at Gilgit after the accession to Pakistan was Mr. Aslam who was assistant political agent at NWA in 1940.

BALTISTAN

Pakistan government sent Sardar Muhammad Alam and Major Muhammad Aslam as political agent and military commanders respectively. By the end of November 1947 Major Muhammad Aslam under the name de plume of Colonel Pasha organized the available forces into four wings and decided to continue fight for freedom of Baltistan despite approaching winters. Colonel Pasha identified two axis along which enemy could send reinforcements—one was along Bandipura through Tragbal pass, Minimergh and Gilgit whereas the other was along Zoji La, Kargil, Hamzigund and Skardu. The main task, however, was to free Skardu from the Dogra forces. Basing on this identification colonel Pasha organized his four wings into two forces i.e Tiger Force and Ibex Force.

Tiger Force. It was commanded by Captain (later Lieutenant Colonel) Hassan Khan. Its task was to capture Tragbal pass and check enemy reinforcement towards Gilgit. The force left Bunji on 3 March 1948 and by mid of March it was able to capture Tragbal Pass. In May 1948 enemy launched an attack with two Brigades. The Tiger Force defended their position relentlessly but ill equipped and ill fed 300 troops could not hold on for long and had to withdraw from the Pass on 16 May 1948. They, however, took up positions about 20 miles behind where they stayed on till cease fire.

Ibex Force. This force was commanded by Major Ehsan Ali of Hunza. Its task was to free Baltistan and advance right upto Kargil, Daras and Zoji La Pass to stop enemy reinforcement along Indus Valley. It left Bunji along Indus River on 29 January 1948. After clearing enemy resistance at Rondou the force encamped at Sondus in the foot of Kharpocho forte. Muslim elements in the Dogra force had silently joined Major Ihsan Ali and it was decided to attack Skardu on night 22-23 February 1948. Everything went as planned but unfortunately the sentry who had to fire green signal fired red one by mistake and hence chance for a surprise attack was lost. Fierce fight ensued but Major Ihsan Ali had to withdraw to reorganize and regroup.

Enemy started reinforcing Skardu and a brigade size force was approaching from Indus Valley side. This force was successfully ambushed at Thorgo Pari and huge quantity of weapon, ammunition and ration was captured. Siege of Skardu continued till August 1948 since enemy had been supplying the garrison by air. On 14 August 1948, exactly one year after Pakistan's Independence, Skardu was surrendered by Dogra forces.

Eskimo Force. After unsuccessful attack on Skardu in February 1948, Colonel Pasha organized another force at Chilam Chauki under Lieutenant Colonel Shah Khan. The force was named Eskimo force. It had to capture Kargil, Dras and Zoji la Passe which was initially the task of Ibex force. This force successfully captured Kargil and completed the siege of

Dras when they were joined by Ibex Force. These two forces combined played havoc with enemy and were able to capture Kargil, Dras, Zoji la Pass and had invested Leh as well. At this point in time, General Headquarters replaced Colonel Pasha with Colonel Jilani who decided to strengthen his positions at Kargil, Dras and Zojila and abandoned the idea to attack Leh. The major considerations for this were lack of recourses and over dispersion of forces. On 1 January 1949 when ceasefire was ordered, Pakistan forces were holding a line roughly Kargil, Dras and Zoji la Pass.

PEACE PROPOSALS 1948

The role of UNO in solving Kashmir issue is very interesting in nature as it was the very first challenge which arose after UNO raising, in a historical perspective the taking of Kashmir issue in UNO speaks of civilisation and mind set of the Dravidian culture, Nehru in his ideals of his 'tryst with destiny'¹⁹⁹ was conscious of history whereas Jinnah was more practical in approach. This also reflects the military culture of the Dravidians which lacked the will to strike first.

The issue was raised in January 1948 and world community took keen interest in its solution working on Saturday morning and evening, Sir Zafarullah Khan initially tried to delay the proceedings mainly to gain time for the tribesmen to consolidate their position, he gave a historical colour to his narrative spread over two days, he insisted on the solution of Kashmir on the basis of the this aspect whereas the Indian stance was legal in nature where they stressed on the legality of accession and admitted on the fact that state has an overwhelming Muslim majority yet countered by again referring to the legal aspects. After hearing point of view of both dominions the unanimous and immediate decision was {Security Council **Resolution 38** of 17 January 1948} *'to take immediately all measures within their power (including public appeals to their people) calculated to improve the situation and to refrain from making any statements and from doing or causing to be done or permitting any acts which might aggravate the situation'*.²⁰⁰¹

The debate in Security Council also {Security Council **Resolution 39** of 20 January 1948} established the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP) with General McNaughton of Canada as chairman.

On 21 April 1948 the Security Council adopted its **Resolution 47**. This recommended that the Pakistani Government use its 'Best endeavours to secure the withdrawal from the State of Jammu and Kashmir of tribesmen and Pakistani nationals not normally resident therein who have entered the State for the purposes of fighting and to prevent any intrusion into the State of such elements and any furnishing of material aid to those fighting in the State'.²⁰¹

After arrangements for the cessation of the fighting have become effective {Indian Government} 'put into operation in consultation with the Commission a plan for withdrawing

¹⁹⁹ <http://www.youtube.co.nehru/s> speech on 14th August 1947. {accessed on 23 November 2010}

²⁰⁰ Security Council Papers, p 119, 17th January 1948.

²⁰¹ Ibid, 19th April 1948.

their own forces from Jammu and Kashmir and reducing them progressively to the minimum strength required for the support of civil power in the maintenance of law and order'.²⁰²

SECURITY COUNCIL RESOLUTION 47

Having considered the complaint of the Government of India concerning the dispute over the State of Jammu and Kashmir, having heard the representative of India in support of that complaint and the reply and counter complaints of the representative of Pakistan, *Being strongly* of opinion that the early restoration of peace and order in Jammu and Kashmir is essential and that India and Pakistan should do their utmost to bring about cessation of all fighting, *Noting* with satisfaction that both India and Pakistan desire that the question of the accession

of Jammu and Kashmir to India or Pakistan should be decided through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite, *Considering* that the continuation of the dispute is likely to endanger international peace and security, *Reaffirms* its resolution 38 (1948) of 17 January 1948;

Resolves that the membership of the Commission established by its resolution 39 (1948) of 20 January 1948, shall be increased to five and shall include, in addition to the membership mentioned in that Resolution, representatives of and.... and that if the membership of the Commission has not been completed within ten days from the date of the adoption of this resolution the President of the Council may designate such other Member or Members of the United Nations as are required to complete the membership of five; *Instructs* the Commission to proceed at once to the Indian subcontinent and there place its good offices and mediation at the disposal of the Governments of India and Pakistan with a view to facilitating the taking of the necessary measures, both with respect to the restoration of peace and order and to the holding of a plebiscite by the two Governments, acting in cooperation with one another and with the Commission, and further instructs the Commission to keep the Council informed of the action taken under the resolution; and, to this end, *Recommends* to the Governments of India and Pakistan the following measures as those which in the opinion of the Council and appropriate to bring about a cessation of the fighting and to create proper conditions for a free and impartial plebiscite to decide whether the State of Jammu and Kashmir is to accede to India or Pakistan.

A-RESTORATION OF PEACE AND ORDER

1. The Government of Pakistan should undertake to use its best endeavours:

(a) To secure the withdrawal from the State of Jammu and Kashmir of tribesmen and

Pakistani nationals not normally resident therein who have entered the State for the purposes of fighting, and to prevent any intrusion into the State of such elements and any furnishing of material aid to those fighting in the State;

²⁰² Ibid.

(b)To make known to all concerned that the measures indicated in this and the following paragraphs provide full freedom to all subjects of the State, regardless of creed, caste, or party, to express their views and to vote on the question of the accession of the State, and that therefore they should co-operate in the maintenance of peace and order.

2.The Government of India should:

(a)When it is established to the satisfaction of the Commission set up in accordance with the Council's Resolution 39 (1948) that the tribesmen are withdrawing and that arrangements for the cessation of the fighting have become effective, put into operation in consultation with the Commission a plan for withdrawing their own forces from Jammu and Kashmir and reducing them progressively to the minimum strength required for the support of the civil power in the maintenance of law and order;

(b)Make known that the withdrawal is taking place in stages and announce the completion of each stage;

(c)When the Indian forces shall have been reduced to the minimum strength mentioned in(a) above, arrange in consultation with the Commission for the stationing of the remaining forces to be carried out in accordance with the following principles:

(i)That the presence of troops should not afford any intimidation or appearance of intimidation to the inhabitants of the State;

(ii)That as small a number as possible should be retained in forward areas;

(iii)that any reserve of troops which may be included in the total strength should be located within their present base area.

3.The Government of India should agree that until such time as the plebiscite administration referred to below finds it necessary to exercise the powers of direction and supervision over the State forces and policy provided for in paragraph 8, they will be held in areas to be agreed upon with the Plebiscite Administrator.

4.After the plan referred to in paragraph 2 (a) above has been put into operation, personnel recruited locally in each district should so far as possible be utilized for the re-establishment and maintenance of law and order with due regard to protection of minorities, subject to such additional requirements as may be specified by the Plebiscite Administration referred to in paragraph 7.

5. If these local forces should be found to be inadequate, the Commission, subject to the agreement of both the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan, should arrange for the use of such forces of either Dominion as it deems effective for the purpose of pacification.

B-PLEBISCITE

6.The Government of India should undertake to ensure that the Government of the State invite the major political groups to designate responsible representatives to share equitably

and fully in the conduct of the administration at the ministerial level, while the plebiscite is being prepared and carried out.

7.The Government of India should undertake that there will be established in Jammu and Kashmir a Plebiscite Administration to hold a Plebiscite as soon as possible on the question of the accession of the State to India or Pakistan.

8.The Government of India should undertake that there will be delegated by the State to the Plebiscite Administration such powers as the latter considers necessary for holding a fair and impartial plebiscite including, for that purpose only, the direction and supervision of the State forces and police.

9.The Government of India should at the request of the Plebiscite Administration, make available from the Indian forces such assistance as the Plebiscite Administration may require for the performance of its functions.

10.(a) The Government of India should agree that a nominee of the Secretary-General of the United Nations will be appointed to be the Plebiscite Administrator.

(b)The Plebiscite Administrator, acting as an officer of the State of Jammu and Kashmir,should have authority to nominate the assistants and other subordinates and to draft regulations governing the Plebiscite. Sqch nominees should be formally appointed and such draft regulations should be formally promulgated by the State of Jammu and Kashmir.

(c)The Government of India should undertake that the Government of Jammu and Kashmir will appoint fully qualified persons nominated by the Plebiscite Administrator to act as special magistrates within the State judicial system to hear cases which in the opinion of the Plebiscite Administrator have a serious bearing on the preparation and the conduct of a free and impartial plebiscite.

(d)The terms of service of the Administrator should form the subject of a separate negotiation between the Secretary-General of the United Nations and the Government of India. The Administrator should fix the terms of service for his assistants and subordinates.

(e)The Administrator should have the right to communicate directly, with the Government of the State and with the Commission of the Security Council and, through the Commission,with the Security Council, with the Governments of India and Pakistan and with their representatives with the Commission. It would be his duty to bring to the notice of any or all of the foregoing (as he in his discretion may decide) any circumstances arising which may tend, in his opinion, to interfere with the freedom ofthe Plebiscite.

11.The Government of India should undertake to prevent and to give full support to the Administrator and his staff in preventing any threat, coercion or intimidation, bribery or other undue influence on the voters in the plebiscite, and the Government of India should publicly announce and should cause the Government of the State to announce this

undertaking as an international obligation binding on all public authorities and officials in Jammu and Kashmir.

12.The Government of India should themselves and through the Government of the State declare and make known ' that all subjects of the State of Jammu and Kashmir, regardless of creed, caste or party, will be safe and free in expressing their views and in voting on the question of the accession of the State and that there will be freedom of the Press, speech and assembly and freedom of travel in the State, including freedom of lawful entry and exit.

13.The Government of India should use and should ensure that the Government of the State also use their best endeavour to effect the withdrawal from the State of all Indian nationals other than those who are normally resident therein or who on or since 1st August 1947 have entered it for a lawful purpose.

14.The Government of India should ensure that the Government of the State releases all political prisoners and take all possible steps so that :

(a)all citizens of the State who have left it on account of disturbances are invited and are free to return to their homes and to exercise their rights as citizens,

(b)there is no victimization;

(c)minorities in all parts of the State are accorded adequate protection.

15.The Commission of the Security Council should at the end of the plebiscite certify to the Council whether the plebiscite has or has not been really free and impartial.

C-GENERAL PROVISIONS

16.The Governments of India and Pakistan should each be invited to nominate a representative to be attached to the Commission for such assistance as it may require in the performance of its task.

17.The Commission should establish in Jammu and Kashmir such observers as it may require of any of the proceedings in pursuance of the measures indicated in the foregoing paragraphs.

18.The Security Council Commission should carry out the tasks assigned to it herein

The very first result of these efforts was the cease fire accepted by the both dominions at Karachi which came into force on 1st January 1949, the resolutions of UNO now became subject to strategic paradigms of each opponent, as now India was portrayed as enemy by Pakistani press. The resolutions called for the evacuation of all Muslim militants from all of Kashmir state and that included Gilgit, Baltistan and Poonch areas almost 1/3 of Kashmir state, it was not culturally possible for the Pakistan to accept this clause seldom in history has ever any conqueror given back his possessions , in modern politics the leaders of Pakistan Jinnah and after him from September 1948 onwards Liaquat Ali Khan were shrewd enough to balance the advantages of having a sizeable territory under their control

13 AUGUST 1948

Resolution adopted by the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan, , S/1100, para 75, 9 November, 1948.

THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR INDIA AND PAKISTAN Having given careful consideration to the points of view expressed by the Representatives of India and Pakistan regarding the situation in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, and Being of the opinion that the prompt cessation of hostilities and the correction of conditions the continuance of which is likely to endanger international peace and security are essential to implementation of its endeavours to assist the Governments of India and Pakistan in effecting a final settlement of the situation, Resolves to submit simultaneously to the Governments of India and Pakistan the following proposal:

PART I

CEASE-FIRE ORDER

A. The Governments of India and Pakistan agree that their respective High Commands will issue separately and simultaneously a cease-fire order to apply to all forces under their control in the State of Jammu and Kashmir as of the earliest practicable date or dates to be mutually agreed upon within four days after these proposals have been accepted by both Governments.

B. The High Commands of Indian and Pakistan forces agree to refrain from taking any measures that might augment the military potential of the forces under their control in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. (For the purpose of these proposals "forces under their control" shall be considered to include all forces, organised and unorganised, fighting or participating in hostilities on their respective sides).

C. The Commanders-in-Chief of the Forces of India and Pakistan shall promptly confer regarding any necessary local changes in present dispositions which may facilitate the ceasefire.

D. In its discretion, and as the commission may find practicable, the Commission will appoint military observers who under the authority of the Commission and with the co-operation of both Commands will supervise the observance of the cease-fire order.

E. The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan agree to appeal to their respective peoples to assist in creating, and to maintaining an atmosphere favourable to the promotion of further negotiations.

PART II

TRUCE AGREEMENT

Simultaneously with the acceptance of the proposal for the immediate cessation of hostilities as outlined in Part I, both Governments accept the following principles as a basis for the formulation of a truce agreement, the details of which shall be worked out in discussion between their Representatives and the Commission.

A. (1) As the presence of troops of Pakistan in the territory of the State of Jammu and Kashmir constitutes a material change in the situation since it was represented by the Government of Pakistan before the Security Council, the Government of Pakistan agrees to withdraw its troops from that State.

(2)The Government of Pakistan will use its best endeavour to secure the withdrawal from the State of Jammu and Kashmir of tribesmen and Pakistan nationals not normally resident therein who have entered the State for the purpose of fighting.

(3)Pending a final solution the territory evacuated by the Pakistan troops will be administered by the local authorities under the surveillance of the Commission.

B.(1)When the Commission shall have notified the Government of India that the tribesmen and Pakistan nationals referred to in Part 11 A 2 hereof have withdrawn, thereby tenninating the situation which was represented by the Government of India to the Security Council as having occasioned the presence of Indian forces in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, and further. that the Pakistan forces are being withdrawn from the State of Jammu and Kashmir. the Government of India agrees to begin to withdraw the bulk of their forces from the State in stages to be agreed upon with the Commission.

(2)Pending the acceptance of the conditions for a final settlement of the situation in the State of Jammu and Kashmir, the Indian Government will maintain within the lines existing at the moment of cease-fire the minimum strength of its forces which in agreement with the Commission are considered necessary to assist local authorities in the observance of law and order. The Commission will have observers stationed where it deems necessary.

(3)The Government of India will undertake to ensure that the Government of the State of Jammu and Kashmir will take all measures within their power to make it publicly known that peace, law and order will be safeguarded and that all human and political rights will be guaranteed.

C. (1)Upon signature, the full text of the Truce Agreement or communique containing the principles thereof as agreed upon between the two Governments and the Commission, will be made public.

PART III

The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan reaffirm their wish that the future status of the State of Jammu and Kashmir shall be determined in accordance with the will.of the people and to that end, upon acceptance of the Truce Agreement both Governments agree to enter into consultations with the Commission to determine fair and equitable conditions hereby such free expression will be assured.

Kashmir was a matter of prestige for the infant nation, the power corridor that starts from Kabul-Peshawar-Lahore-Delhi of Delhi Sultanate was still active the races were the same ,nothing has changed it seems in this thousand years, the Punjab which remained a jewel in the crown of the Raj could not be isolated from Srinagar, Lahore had more right over it then Delhi. On other hand Nehru gave a pledge to the world of a plebiscite in Kashmir.²⁰³

KARACHI AGREEMENT, AZAD KASHMIR

²⁰³ Ibid 6th January 1948.

Text of the agreement signed between Pakistan and Azad Kashmir Governments in **April 1949**. The Agreement was signed by the following:

1. Honourable Mushtaque Ahmed Gurmani, Minister without Portfolio, Government of Pakistan. 2. Sardar Mohammed Ibrahim Khan, the president of Azad Kashmir. 3. Choudhry Ghulam Abbas, Head of All Jammu and Kashmir Muslim Conference.

A. Matters within the purview of the Government of Pakistan.

1. Defence (as modified under....).
2. Foreign policy of Azad Kashmir.
3. Negotiations with the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan.
4. Publicity in foreign countries and in Pakistan.
5. Co - ordination and arrangement of relief and rehabilitation of refugees.
6. Co - ordination of publicity in connection with plebiscite.
7. All activities within Pakistan regarding Kashmir such as procurement of food, civil supplies running of refugee camps and medical aid.
8. All affairs of Gilgit - Ladakh under the control of Political Agent.

B. Matters within the purview of Azad Kashmir Government.

1. Policy with regard to administration of AK territory.
2. General supervision of administration in AK territory.
3. Publicity with regard to the activities of the Azad Kashmir Government and administration.
4. Advice to the honourable Minister without Portfolio with regard to negotiations with United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan.
5. Development of economic resources of AK territory.

C. Matters within the purview of the Muslim Conference.

1. Publicity with regard to plebiscite in the AK territory.
2. Field work and publicity in the Indian occupied area of the State.
3. Organisation of political activities in the AK territory and the Indian occupied area of the State.
4. Preliminary arrangements in connection with the plebiscite.
5. Organisation for contesting the plebiscite.
6. Political work and publicity among the Kashmiri refugees in Pakistan.
7. Advise the honourable minister without Portfolio with regard to the negotiations with the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan.

5TH JANUARY 1949

Resolution adopted by the United Nations Commission For India and Pakistan, 5 January 1949, S/1196, para 15, 10 January 1949.

THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION FOR INDIA AND PAKISTAN, Having received from the Governments of India and Pakistan in Communications, dated December 23 and December 25, 1948, respectively their acceptance of the following principles which are supplementary to the Commission's Resolution of August 13, 1948,

1 .The question of the accession of the State of Jammu and Kashmir to India or Pakistan will be decided through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite;

2. A plebiscite will be held when it shall be found by the Commission that the cease-fire and truce arrangements set forth in Parts I and 11 of the Commission's resolution of 13 August 1948, have been carried out and arrangements for the plebiscite have been completed,

3.(a) The Secretary-General of the United Nations will, in agreement with the Commission, nominate a Plebiscite Administrator who shall be a personality of high international standing and commanding general confidence. He will be formally appointed to office by the Government of Jammu and Kashmir.

(b)The Plebiscite Administrator shall derive from the State of Jammu and Kashmir the powers he considers necessary for organizing and conducting the plebiscite and for ensuring the freedom and impartiality of the plebiscite.

(c)The Plebiscite Administrator shall have authority to appoint such staff or assistants and observers as he may require.

4.(a) After implementation of Parts I and 11 of the Commission's resolution of 13 August 1948, and when the Commission is satisfied that peaceful conditions have been restored in the State. the Commission and the Plebiscite Administrator will determine, in consultation with the Government of India, the final disposal of Indian and State armed forces, such disposal to be with due regard to the security of the State and the freedom of the plebiscite.

(b)As regards the territory referred to in A 2 of Part 11 of the resolution of 13 August, final disposal of the armed forces in that territory will be determined by the Commission and the Plebiscite Administrator in consultation with the local authorities.

5.All civil and military authorities within the State and the principal political elements of the State will be required to cooperate with the Plebiscite Administrator in the preparation for and the holding of the plebiscite.

6.(a) All citizens of the State who have left it on account of the disturbances will be invited and be free to return and to exercise all their rights as such citizens. For the purpose of facilitating repatriation there shall be appointed two Commissions, one composed of nominees of India and the other of nominees of Pakistan. The Commissions shall operate under the direction of the Plebiscite Administrator. The Governments of India and Pakistan

and all authorities within the State of Jammu and Kashmir will collaborate with the Plebiscite Administrator in putting this provision to effect.

(b) All persons (other than citizens of the State) who on or since 15 August 1947, have entered it for other than lawful purpose, shall be required to leave the State.

7. All authorities within the State of Jammu and Kashmir will undertake to ensure in collaboration with the Plebiscite Administrator that:

(a) There is no threat, coercion or intimidation, bribery or other undue influence on the voters in plebiscite;

(b) No restrictions are placed on legitimate political activity throughout the State. All subjects of the State, regardless of creed, caste or party, shall be safe and free in expressing their views and in voting on the question of the accession of the State to India or Pakistan. There shall be freedom of the Press, speech and assembly and freedom of travel in the State, including freedom of lawful entry and exit;

(c) All political prisoners are released;

(d) Minorities in all parts of the State are accorded adequate protection; and

(e) There is no victimization.

8. The Plebiscite Administrator may refer to the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan problems on which he may require assistance, and the Commission may in its discretion call upon the Plebiscite Administrator to carry out on its behalf any of the responsibilities with which it has been entrusted;

9. At the conclusion of the plebiscite, the Plebiscite Administrator shall report the result thereof to the Commission and to the Government of Jammu and Kashmir. The Commission shall then certify to the Security Council whether the Plebiscite has or has not been free and impartial;

10. Upon the signature of the truce agreement the details of the foregoing proposals will be elaborated in the consultation envisaged in Part 111 of the Commission's resolution of 13 August 1948. The Plebiscite Administrator will be fully associated in these consultations; Commends the Governments of India and Pakistan for their prompt action in ordering a cease-fire to take effect from one minute before midnight of first January 1949, pursuant to the agreement arrived at as provided for by the Commission's resolution of 13 August 1948; and Resolves to return in the immediate future to the sub-continent to discharge the responsibilities imposed upon it by the resolution of 13 August 1948, and by the foregoing principles.

The efforts of UNO in this ripe period centred on Dixon Owen the Australian representative in UNO who headed the task of mediating and find a solution of Kashmir. Mr Dixon floated the idea of taking and treating Kashmir state like a miniature India and dividing its components Baltistan {Gilgit} to Pakistan along with Poonch whereas Jammu and Laddakh to India and that finally leaves Kashmir where Dixon recommended a

plebiscite²⁰⁴. His proposal was not agreed upon by both whereas Nehru showed bit of interest in it. Dixon finally gave up and admitted his inability to reach any compromise. UNO continued with the efforts but in a different manner.

UNO continued with the efforts but in a different manner. Leaders of Pakistan Mr Bogra almost reached a solution before he was sacked. One key factor of the delay in the peaceful end to the saga was arrested by the rapid collapses of civil government in Pakistan which by 1954 had become a constitutional Pandora box unable to settle down culturally and socially. The linguistic riots in Dacca had highlighted the inherent cultural variation within the Pakistan social fabric where as in India ,Nehru remained in power. Pakistan joined the military pact that was designed against communism, thus the importance of NAs became paramount. Nehru remained adhered to his ideas of socialism and non alignment.

THE 1965

Pakistan Army had undergone certain changes in the tactical and organisational outlook in the years preceding the war. General Musa Khan as commander in chief of army had reduced the number of tanks in the armoured division there by creating another armoured division { No. 6 } apart from one {No.1} that already existed. One reconnaissance and support regiment was raised for each infantry division. Number of machine guns in infantry division were also raised but on the other hand number of infantry battalions in an infantry division were reduced.

On tactical level importance was attached to the infantry battalion carrying out operations especially the attack and assault relying upon their integral weapons. The concept of frontal attack was dissuaded and flank attack or attack from rear was promoted.²⁰⁵ In 1964 the pay scales of all ranks were enhanced in army and navy, air force had the increase in 1959 followed by a mutiny.

PAF from the onset had shown a disinterest in supporting the land operations rather they favoured an exclusive air war there by gaining air supremacy and then resorting to limited support to army. Air Marshal Asghar Khan the commander in chief of PAF had stated ‘ *primary aim of PAF was to fight the air battle that it would not be diverted to any other commitment until it had gained air supremacy and that ground troops should treat it as bonus if at any time a very limited air support was provided to them*’²⁰⁶

Pakistan Navy was the Cinderella of armed forces and none knew what will be the role of her in any limited future war. Her importance was in a prolonged war with more commitment in the eastern wing there by keeping the sea lanes open, but in a limited war with focus on land warfare in West Pakistan her importance was secondary.

²⁰⁴ Alastair Lamb, *Kashmir Legacy*, p,171-173

²⁰⁵ Musa Khan General *Jawan to General Recollections of a Pakistani Soldier*, {East & West Publishing, Karachi, 1984} p- 141.

²⁰⁶ *Jawan to General*, p – 142.

RANN OF KUTCH

Topography

Roughly north of parallel 24 degrees east of Karachi, a desolate area of mud, swamp and salt stretches eastward for almost 200 miles into India. For much of the year the great Rann of Kutch (Rann means battlefield in Sanskrit) remains submerged in sea water. In summer it becomes one of the hottest places on earth, it is not a desert but then neither it is a plain or sea. Bhits are few feet of raised grounds and population is scarce, only around brackish water holes. Their only living is making salt from sea water.

Chronology

The international boundary between India and Pakistan was never really demarcated in this area. Even during the reign of Raj the boundary between Sindh and princely state of Bhuj was undetermined mainly due to its vastness and absolute dearth of life. The weather phenomenon receded the sea to an extent that 3500 square kilometres area became disputed. In 1951, Sindh Police and Rangers established a few posts along southern edge of Pakistan side of Rann. In 1953, these posts were abandoned due to cyclone, which were later claimed by the Indians. In 1958, Prime Minister Noon and Nehru discussed these posts and matter was put into cold till 1965.

Pakistan stance was based upon the revenue and other records there by claiming that international border runs along 24th latitude where by India claimed the boundary to be slightly north of this latitude.²⁰⁷

THE STORY OF DWARKA RECONNAISSANCE - 1964

A year before the conflict, two L-19s carried out first ever cross border aerial reconnaissance. Captain Mir Saadat Ullah of 1 Army Aviation Squadron joins the Rann of Kutch conflict on 18th April 1964 when he took off from Dhamial Base in L-19 No.984 with him in another L-19 was the formation leader Captain Subhan Baig. Both pilots reached Hyderabad after flying eight hours and fifteen minutes having refuelled at Multan and Jacobabad en-route. Captain Saadat Ullah narrates. "In February 1962 a flight of 2 Squadron had co-operated with 19 Baloch Regiment in Hyderabad area in which Captains Nazir, Younas, Subhan Baig and Sarfraz took part. Back in 1961 Captain Rafiq and Captain Siraj had also flown to Karachi for co-operation with 19 Baloch Regiment. The background of these missions was to facilitate the 19 Baloch Regiment in preparing contingency plans involving commando raids on Indian naval installations. 19 Baloch Regiment later evolved into present day Special Services Group, at that time it was this regiment which was also responsible for training of naval commandoes. I had three hundred hours of flying experience. We both were briefed by our Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Zafar regarding the secrecy and sensitivity of the mission. Our aircraft were fitted with ACT sets

²⁰⁷ Jawan to General, p – 160.

for communication with PAF fighters and ground communication. The mission was to support the Special Services Group in carrying out the reconnaissance of Rann of Kutch. At Hyderabad we landed at Combined Military Hospital Strip{no more existing} and were received by Captain Vardag and Captain Sadiq of Special Services Group{SSG}. Captain Vardag of Pakistan Army was commanding PNS Himalaya for over four years and was the brain behind these plans. He had been trained at America for underwater commando operations. He had convinced the higher authorities on the feasibility of destroying certain Indian naval installations by using his elite naval commando force. He had also been practicing jumps from the amphibious aircraft of PAF the Albatross SA-16. This company of SSG was stationed at Bholari Airfield for secrecy. Captain Vardag informed us of carrying out aerial photography of the Dwarka radar station located at the edge of Rann of Kutch. Subsequently Captain Subhan Baig planned the mission for the next morning and coordinated with Mauripur and Drigh Road Airbases apart from Badin radar station. We were given the ACT frequencies and were instructed to keep listening watch and in case of emergency to give them a SOS call.

Preliminary Reconnaissance *On 19th April 1964 we took off from Hyderabad with Captain Vardag and Captain Sadiq on board for preliminary reconnaissance of the target area. We flew to within one mile of the target area maintaining 15 feet of height. We could have had flown even more low as Rann is as flat as a billiard table with scanty bushes here and there. After two hours and fifteen minutes of flying we returned to Hyderabad. We found the general target area clear, without any movement. Both guerrilla captains left for Bholari to brief their company. SSG at that time was tasked to prepare contingency plans for all disputed territories. Captain Vardag and Captain Sadiq were manning the naval commandoes and were stationed at Karachi. They had already made certain contingencies for the employment of naval commandoes and raid on Dwarka Radar Station was one such contingency. With the help of Army Aviators these two commando officers wanted to have a close look at the radar and carried out photography. Pilots and commandoes discussed all eventualities including reaction of Indian Air Force and ground based weapons, thus an out line plan was conceived for the reconnaissance. The general outline of the plan revolved around SSG infiltrating on the same night {19 April 1964} and placing themselves close to the target. They were to provide physical cover to pilots in case of any emergency. These SSG troops also had the ACT sets”.*

Overhead Dwarka

Lieutenant Colonel retired Saadat Ullah further narrates “ On 21st April 1964 Captain Baig with Captain Vardag and Captain Sadiq with myself got airborne from Hyderabad Strip at 0600 hours. We were in communication with SSG troops who had infiltrated close to the target area apart from Badin and Karachi Air Bases. At 0730 hours we reached Dwarka area maintaining tree top level, we were 500 yards away from the radar station. Close to the radar Captain Baig pulled up to 300 feet above ground level and I followed him. Simultaneously both SSG officers started taking photographs. We made West to East runs and later North to South runs. The enemy on ground did not reacted although army

vehicles were visible, probably Indians were too surprise to react. After three minutes of photography we rushed back to Badin, flying at ten feet, we first hit Rahim Ki Bazar and later reached Hyderabad. Squadron Leader Butt officer in-charge at Badin Radar rang us and informed that as soon as we left the target area two Indian jets were spotted on the radar screen for over fifteen minutes.

Mission Not Yet Over. Same day{21 April 1964} we flew to Drigh Road where films were developed and at night Captain Vardag and Captain Sadiq gave the bad news that western side of the target area has not been photographed and it is vital for any successful raid on the target. Captain Baig without any hesitation agreed to undertake the mission again on 22nd April. Captain Baig sensing that enemy is alerted wisely changed the take off time to 0430 hours, he also changed the route of coming back from the target area. Now instead of coming to Hyderabad we would be landing at Mauripur Air Base. Flying over sea for over forty minutes for a non swimmer like me was horrible thought but SSG officers gave me their words that come what may they will swim me to the shore.

Final Run. On 22 April 1964, we took off from Hyderabad in dark at 0430 hours and planned to reach target area by 0600 hours. Everything went as planned and we hit the south-eastern side of the radar station keeping a distance of 800 yards from it. SSG officers took the requisite photographs. On the third run we were fired upon by the ground troops, meanwhile Badin Radar also came on the air and advised us to exit the target area as two Indian jets were approaching from a distance of 200 miles. We immediately went down to the sea level and headed for Karachi, Captain Baig was maintaining 10 feet and I was slightly higher than him. The total flying time from Dwarka to Somiani was about 35 minutes and after 15 minutes of flying Mauripur Base came on air to tell us that two Sabres of PAF were airborne to provide us the cover. We landed safely at Mauripur. On 25th April 1964 we both proceeded to Jacobabad and on 26th April 1964 we reached back Dhamial.”

Events of 1965

In January 1965, Indians started probing forward. They reached our posts at Mara, Rahim ki Bazaar, Ding, Kanjarkot and Surai. Indians also reinforced the area with 2 battalions of Border Security Force. On 19th February 1965, Indian aircraft violated our airspace. On 6th March 1965, General Headquarters ordered Major General Tikka Khan{ 8 Infantry Division} to allow no further violation of own territory. General Tikka had following troops under his command

- | | |
|------------|--|
| 6 Brigade | Brigadier Iftikhar Janjua (6 Punjab, 15 Punjab, 2 Frontier Force). |
| 51 Brigade | Brigadier KM Azhar (18 Punjab, 6 Baluch, 8 Frontier Force). |
| 52 Brigade | Brigadier Sardar Ismail (7 Punjab, 17 Baluch). |

Divisional Artillery was commanded by Brigadier Aslam (14 Field, 25 Field, 38 Field, 12 Medium, 83 Mortar Battery and 88 Mortar Battery)

3 Engineers Battalion, 14 Signal Battalion, 24 Cavalry (joined later from Lahore) and 12 Cavalry (one squadron) were the additional troops allocated for the operations.

Indians had following Troops

31 Brigade in area Sardar Post - Ggid Kot- Karim Shah.

50 Para Brigade in area Dharm Sala- Biar Bhit.

AMX Tank Regiment in Karma- Biar Bhit- Dharm Sala.

11 & 167 Field Regiments and 71 Medium Battery.

Army Aviation Build Up

To support the forthcoming operations in the area, General Headquarters decided to inject the aviation effort in the area. Two sections of L-19 piloted by Captain Zafar and Captain Mir Saadat were rushed in on 8th April 1965. They reached in the nick of time to support the operations of 51 Brigade.

10th April 1965, onwards General Headquarters supplemented the aviation effort with additional L-19s. Major Fazal subsequently built up a full fledged fixed wing flight with Captain Hesam (who earned the distinction of being the first non-gunner flight commander in Army Aviation, commanded an infantry battalion in 1971 War against India and was wounded as well, before his repatriation to Bangladesh). Others were Captains Khalid Saeed, Farooq, H.U.K. Niazi and Jaffar. Maintenance support was provided by 199 EME Battalion.

51 Brigade

51 Brigade launched attack at 0200 hours on 9th April 1965, with an objective to capture following:-

Phase I – Capture of Sardar Post (18 Punjab & 8 FF). At 0330 hours, 8 FF was halted 500 yards short of post and by 0530 hours assaulting companies had pulled back from objective.

Phase II – Capture of Jungle Post (6 Baluch). At 0445 hours, battalion had captured an out post and at 1130 hours, they were 2000 yards short of the enemy post, having difficulty in getting fire support from 14 Field Regiment. At 1400 hours, Brigadier Azhar was informed by the Air Observation Post (OP) regarding Indian reinforcement of 70-80 vehicles on their way to Sardar Post. At 1530 hours, attack was called off.

First Operational Use of Helicopters – 18th April 1965

GHQ ordered the move of two helicopters to Badin for Rann of Kutch Operations. This was the first operational use of the choppers by Pakistan Army. Lieutenant Colonel Naseer Ullah Khan Babar, the squadron commander and Captain Manzoor Kamal Bajwa scrambled to support the operation with two OH-13(S) helicopters, No. 143 and 144. It was a

long hop; they took off from Dhamial Base at 1330 hours on 18th April and reached Badin at 1740 hours on 19th April 1965 with refuelling at Sargodha, Multan, Khanpur, Sukkur and Nawabshah. Captain Bajwa recalls that, "It was Sunday and I was the duty officer at Dhamial when at 1100 hours, I got a call from GHQ that two helicopters would be on 6 hours notice. After some time I got the call to take off in 30 minutes. Weather was inclement, Lieutenant Colonel Babar who was living in Lalazar Estate, decided to come along as most of other pilots were busy in promotion examination. Helicopters zigzagged through thunderstorm and rain. At Sargodha we were briefed by the met officer. We eventually had to pass through two fronts before we reached Badin. At one point we decided to force land but there was no dry place visible and entire landscape was submerged in 2 feet water. We flew at tree top level, luckily avoiding poles and high tension wires." Maintenance crew included Havildar (Major retired) Malang Badshah who reached Badin by train.

Field Conditions at Rann

During April it was rather hot and humid and the salt laden sand in windy conditions was a challenge for the machines not equipped for prolonged operations in the desert. One OH-13(S) No.143 was fitted with two litter pods for casualty evacuation. The choppers and L-19s were kept busy and proved very useful since there were no roads. The sandy tracks were boggy, warranting slow movements over land. The choppers were mostly used for field reconnaissance and critical casualty evacuation. Senior commanders and staff officers were extensively flown for visits, liaison and reconnaissance missions.

Unusually Cold Cargo

Conditions in the field were rather tough with no shade and abundance of snakes in the sand dunes. The heat, humidity and dust created difficult environment for the doctors, at the field hospital located at Diplo. The critically wounded patients lay in the sweltering heat. The heat stroke centre had no ice. Being along the usual route to the front line, every morning, pilots would voluntarily pick up one full size ice block in the small bubble canopy of OH-13(S) and deliver it to the hospital at Diplo. It provided great relief to the patients and the doctors.

First Trans -Frontier Rotary Reconnaissance

6 Brigade had information of major Indian build up across the enemy side of the Rann of Kutch. The brigade commander desired to ascertain correct enemy strength before launching the offensive at Biar Bhit. Being a hazardous mission it was not meant for an unarmed helicopter. The target to be reconnoitred was approximately 20 kilometres away from the brigade headquarters. The pilot (Captain Bajwa) was informed that, reportedly there were no anti-aircraft guns at the enemy location, but small arms fire from the ground could be expected.

On 22nd April, Captain Bajwa along with Brigadier Janjua and Lieutenant Colonel Nagi proceeded for the reconnaissance. In order to shorten the enemy reaction time, the pilot proceeded towards north along the border, concealed behind the sand dunes. When abeam the enemy location the pilot crossed over to the Rann. The dry Rann was flat and smooth like a tabletop. The helicopter dashed across, barely 20 feet above the flat dust free bed, heading for the location barely 13 kilometres from our Forward Defensive Localities (FDL). When in sight of the location the pilot pulled up to 3500 feet just before overhead the enemy. *“Two hasty figure 8 turns were executed to look around before heading back. Surprisingly we did not encounter any ground fire. The force on the ground was much below our expectations. We were expecting to see at least, a battalion strength, but it turned out to be less than a company.”*

Once out of enemy range the pilot descended to the deck level and dashed towards the nearest FDLs, and disappeared among the bushes and the high sand dunes. Minutes before crossing the home boundary he noticed two Indian jets at approximately 3000 feet. Fortunately the jets turned back short of the border. This reconnaissance was useful as the ultimate direction of the successful offensive was diverted about 45 degrees to the right, where the major force had entrenched at Chad Bet and Point 84.

Capture of Point 84

On 23 April 1965 at 1700 hours, Brigadier Janjua gave the orders to capture Point 84 on 24 April mainly due to the aerial reconnaissance support available to support the operation. On 24 April, between 1100 hours to 1430 hours area was kept under observation by pilots in L-19 and gave vital information regarding the enemy dispositions. 3 Squadron War Diary records the fact, “The helicopter took part in the attack and capture of Point 84 position. One Indian Canberra bomber dived and made feint attack on our helicopter.”

Biar Bhit Operation

Aviation was tasked to undertake another reconnaissance mission, immediately after the successful attack on Point 84. The mission was to locate the enemy gun positions in the proximity of the area for a night operation. One commando officer accompanied the pilot, Captain Bajwa in OH-13(S) for reconnaissance. He recalls, “Over the objective while flying a figure 8 within clear sight of the enemy artillery gun emplacements, suddenly the chopper rocked violently. The commando officer out of excitement shook the wrist of the pilot holding the delicate and sensitive cyclic control of the helicopter. The officer excitedly shouted, “You are on fire.” The pilot immediately turned homewards and simultaneously glanced at the instruments and looked for any traces of smoke or fire. When asked, “Where is the fire?” The officer calmly pointed to the gun emplacements, from where the Indian guns had just fired a salvo, at our positions or may be tried to engage us with direct fire.” Being a gunner the pilot could understand the direct hit by a field gun was a rare possibility. The pilot turned back again to have a good look. The location was indicated to the pilot of the L-19, carrying out battle surveillance, over the recently over run enemy position. Soon after our

landing we could see the huge smoke billowing above the horizon. The attack was carried out on the same night by 2 FF and 15 Punjab on Biar Bhit and captured the objective by 0800 hours”.

At 1000 hours, aviators who remained in the air from dawn to monitor the area and report enemy movements, saw cloud of dust and reported movement of 40 tanks towards Biar Bhit area from south west. General Tikka immediately moved 24 Cavalry located at Rahim Ki Bazaar to concentrate in area Jatrai. However, no enemy tanks appeared on the scene. Later while walking through the over run Indian position, Captain Bajwa picked up about a dozen of brass ‘*Gadwis*’ an integral part of an Indian soldier, like mugs are to our soldiers. The officers at Badin loved these rare war trophies and each one of them wanted one. So the entire collection disappeared the same evening.

Casualty Evacuation In Darkness

During this operation of Point 84 and Biar Bhit many casualties were evacuated from the frontline to Badin and Hyderabad. In one case, despite the approaching darkness, one OH-13(S), piloted by Lieutenant Colonel Naseer Ullah Khan Babar and Captain Bajwa stayed on till the arrival of the wounded soldier and then took off in pitch darkness carrying one lying and one sitting wounded soldier. Since night navigation was problematic so the party at Badin was asked to fire Very-light shots at regular intervals for helping the pilots to home-on. This helped tremendously and the final touch down was made at 2130 hours. After flying seven sorties at 6 Brigade area they returned to Badin. At once they were asked to evacuate the casualty from ADS to Badin. Captain Bajwa and Colonel Babar carried out the mission. There being no litter, a 6 feet bed was made from a long crate and made comfortable with pillows and blankets. More casualties were evacuated from the FDLs to Diplo or Badin. Pilots involved were Captains Sirajuddin and Naeem.

Getting Wiser and Learning The Ropes

Some good lessons were learnt. A truly operational pilot who desires to stay fit and operational, must be self-sufficient for all provisions of water, food and adequate protective clothing to sustain himself independently. Lapses are liable to ground the pilot and the machine. At times end of the day might be the beginning of one’s longest and the most demanding mission of the day. Pilots tied conventional canvas water bag “Chagall,” filled with water and tied on the helicopter skid, for ready cold and safe drinking water; it worked miraculously well and even helped the pilot make friends with the needy.

Performance in the “Rann”

The Army Aircraft both L-19 and OH-13(S) flew extensively in the poorly mapped region of Rann of Kutch with hardly any worthwhile ground object to navigate. Maps were of the scale of 1:250,000 which for Rann amounted to plain sheets. 8 Division Artillery had mixture of British, American and French equipment. Main wireless set with 14 Field, 38

Field and 12 Medium Regiments were Type 62 British Sets, whereas forward observers had PRC-10, an American Set and both did not overlap with the Aviation Radio Sets. Regular reconnaissance of operational sectors by various commanders, helped in formulating the plans and also for any subsequent modification. During the attack of 6 Brigade, which ultimately rounded the enemy, these flying machines were invariably seen buzzing around and acting as the eyes of the commanders while directing artillery fire and performing other assigned missions. They played a significant role in the capture of Biar-Bhit, Chad-Bhit and Point 84. Total sorties flown in this conflict were 746 with 864 hours and twenty two casualties were evacuated.

General Musa the commander in chief of Pakistan Army wrote ‘ We could have captured a few of their other posts as well as the main water supply ource at Bhuj by exploiting our success at Biar Bet, but for political and strategic reasons it was decided that fighting south of this point should be avoided...from the customs track , Kanjerkot looked like an old dilapidated red brick – kiln in that wilderness. One found it hard to believe that the two countries got involved in an armed clash ... I jokingly remarked to Major General Tikka Khan “ I hope you have not been fighting for a wrong place”²⁰⁸. Pakistan Army left one infantry brigade north of the Rann and moved the rest of forces to predetermined locations.

OPERATION ABLAZE -MAY-1965

Background of the Operation

Military setbacks in Rann of Kutch had demoralized the Indians to an extent that the then Indian Premier Shastri ordered “Operation Ablaze.” It was meant to increase pressure on Pakistani Forces in the northern areas. He also moved formations into their battle locations in May and captured three outlying posts in Kargil area on 16 May 1965. Pakistan took preventive measures and deployed its field formations to prevent any Indian misadventure.

Deployment of Aviation Assets

Army Aviation Base Dhamial, took the requisite steps which included deployment of squadrons with affiliated formations resultantly on 6th May 1965, 2 Army Aviation Squadron moved out in support of 1 Corps and On 28th May 1965, 1 Army Aviation Squadron also moved in 1 Corps area. To assess the feasibility of helicopter operations in the Northern Area ground reconnaissance was also carried out between 21-24 June 1965. Dhamial Base had its assets dispersed from Badin to Sialkot in June 1965 as follows:-

L-19 OH-13

1 Squadron

In support of 7 Division	Balloki	9	3
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²⁰⁸ Jawan to General , p – 161.

8 Division Badin 2

2 Squadron

In support of 1 Corps Kharian 3

Lahore 4

Sialkot 2 2

Rahwali 4 3

3 Squadron

In support of 8 Division Badin 10 5

OPERATION GIBRALTAR, 1st - 31st AUGUST 1965

Pakistan's Answer to Operation Ablaze

In the spring of 1965, simmering agitation in occupied Kashmir intensified due to arrest of Sheikh Abdullah and Hazaratbal incident. Pakistan Army was watchful of the events that were unfolding as a result of Indian aggression, in curbing the freedom movement. In the summer of 1965 the tactical situation in upper Kashmir due to "Operation Ablaze" warranted a quid pro quid in lower Kashmir. Operation Gibraltar was thus aimed at balancing the tactical situation apart from exploiting the unrest in occupied Kashmir, both politically and militarily.

Role of Army Aviation in 'Operation Gibraltar'

3 Squadron was the mainstay in the initial phase of this operation. Pilots would fly to Murree or Muzaffarabad in pairs, there the flight crew chief would get down and general officer commanding{GOC} and brigade commanders would carryout the reconnaissance of the area, at times pilots stayed days in divisional headquarters and flew the commanders to monitor the Cease Fire Line{CFL}.Squadron utilized this opportunity in getting necessary training for mountain flying. At times three pilots would sit in one helicopter, while commanders would be taken as passengers in the other. Pilots were given high altitude check-outs before they carried out these missions.

Commanding Officer- 2 Army Aviation Squadron's Account

Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Khan, was then commanding 2 Army Aviation Squadron during "Operation Gibraltar." It would be just appropriate to reproduce some relevant portions, from his hand written diary.

"At about 1500 hours on 13th August 1965, I received a call from Major Abdul Qayyum, the General Staff Officer, Grade-2 of Dhamial Base who told me to proceed to Bhimber next morning to attend an important conference at the sector headquarters at 1000 hours in connection with an operation."

"I decided to take a flight commander along to put him in picture straight away. I rang up the Aviation Officers Mess where only Major Sarfraz Rabbani was available and I asked him to accompany me the next day in a separate aircraft to Bhimber. There next day, after waiting for some time in the office of the brigade major (BM) where we caught our breaths back not because of thrilling flight but rather due to the fact that the jeep which was bringing us from the landing strip had brake failures at one of the sharp high bend. I was taken to the commander who spelled out details about the operation commencing on 15th August 1965.

In specific terms we were to fly within our own airspace and engage some already known targets along with bringing artillery fire upon any impromptu ones while carrying out surveillance of the area. We were not allowed to carry out any aerial observation that day to avoid Indians getting any inkling, so we decided to go to a dominating forward post to recognize the possible targets and familiarize ourselves with the area. The trip was useful as it help us to get introduced to enemy positions around Lalleal Feature, Red Hill, Mango Hill, Dewa, Chamb, Sakrana, Munawar etc."

"Since Bhimber was in Azad Kashmir so to avoid any hostile air attack, which was a great possibility under the escalating confrontation, I decided to position my aircraft at Gujrat Airfield. Accordingly orders were passed for the required ground party which arrived there on 14th August, led by Captain Muazzam Ali Shah and in good time established the camp and I returned to Dhamial."

The First Aerial Shoot

On 15th August 1965 Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Khan took off from Dhamial with his Second-in-Command, Major Akhtar and reached Bhimber by about 0545 hours. Artillery had already opened up as planned and after a visit to the brigade majors' office he took off for the war zone. Major Sarfraz Rabbani accompanied him as the observer. Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Khan writes

"We brought Artillery Fire on the enemy positions around Dewa and a huge cloud of black smoke started rising from the area. Subsequently it became known that an ammunition dump has been hit, a petrol depot was set on fire and some soft vehicles were also destroyed." 4 Corps Artillery War Diary records *'The Air OP directed our fire with such telling effects that this Indian Regiment never recovered from the punishment'*.

Colonel Khan further narrates

"Later I took Captain Muazzam Ali Shah to familiarize him with the area and Major Rabbani flew Major Akhtar. The day was clear with no clouds anywhere but suddenly a squall hit the area in the afternoon and one aircraft at the Bhimber Strip got damaged because of poor picketing. Luckily I managed to fly it to Gujrat for necessary repairs and from then onward proper picketing arrangements were made at the strip. Realising the scope of future activities, on 16th August, I moved Captain Anwar and Captain Anis Akram Beg to join Major Rabbani. In addition, Major Ayub and Captain Ross Mahmood were also sent to

establish rapport with the field commanders and get to know the area of operation. Now I had a full flight there with an additional flight commander to plug in, if and when required.”

Both the flight commanders formed part of “O”{Orders}Group of Major General Akhtar Malik. Comprehensive orders were received and necessary instructions were issued with regards to the impending operation. A comprehensive Fire Support Plan was given by Brigadier Amjad Ali, Commander Artillery. A high degree of secrecy was maintained and emphasized thus obscuring use of Air OPs till launching of the ‘Operation Grand Slam.’

OPERATION GRAND SLAM

(1- 6 SEPTEMBER 1965)

Operational Concept

Operation Gibraltar fell short of its objectives. In order to relieve the pressure on 12 Division, Pakistan Army launched pre-planned contingency ‘Operation Grand Slam.’ The operation envisaged crossing the cease fire line, capturing Akhnur via Jaurian, with the additional employment of 7 Strike Division. This would cut the Indian Main Supply Route{MSR} to Jammu, thus paving the way for liberation of Indian Held Kashmir{IHK}. Grand Slam was so well conceived, directed and executed that it almost delivered the knock out punch.

Dhamial Base Gets Ready for the War

At about 1230 hours on 30th August 1965, new base commander, Colonel Azmat Baksh Awan held a conference which was attended by all commanding and staff officers. Base Commander briefed the officers on the conduct of ‘Operation Gibraltar’ and the future plans. Colonel Awan had attended the coordination conference of 12 Division on 29/30 August 1965. 1 Army Aviation Squadron was already placed on 6 hours notice since 28th August. Anticipating developments, some restructuring was done for the aviation support being made available to various formations. At Dhamial OH-13s, Beavers, L-19 and L-23 were dispersed under trees and adjoining open area. Aircraft would also fly out in the morning to Fateh Jang and were flown back to the base in the evening.

Operational Affiliation of the Army Aviation Squadrons

1 Army Aviation Squadron. Commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Mian Mahmood was grouped with 7 Infantry Division. Squadron Headquarter along with one flight consisting of four L-19s moved to Gujrat, two L-19s were also placed at Kharian. The officers at Kharian included:-Lieutenant Colonel M M Mahmood, Major Nazir Ahmed, Lieutenant Muhammad Qasim, Captain M Saeed (EME) and Captain Khalid Saeed Khan. In addition, three OH-13(S) helicopters from 3 Squadron were also placed under command 1 Squadron. Two helicopters were placed at Kharian{ Major Bokhari with helicopter No.148 along with

Captain Askree in helicopter No.140}. Captain Aftab with his helicopter No.136 was to remain at Gujrat. The designated elements of 1 Squadron arrived at Gujrat on 31st August at 1000 hours, where a detailed briefing was given by Major Rabbani in the evening, with the flair of a war veteran.

2 Army Aviation Squadron, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Khan already had its one flight {No.6} operating from Bhimber in support of 12 Division. This Flight No.6 consisting of Major Sarfraz Rabbani (flight commander), Captain Pervaiz Zaka, Captain Anis Akram Beg, Captain Anwar Hussain, was now placed under command 1 Squadron, and rest of the 2 Squadron was placed at 6 hours notice. Some pilots were exchanged between 1 and 2 Squadrons to utilize the benefit of the acquired battle experience and the knowledge of the terrain gained.

3 Army Aviation Squadron, commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Naseer Ullah Babar was placed at Dhamial with few of its helicopters placed in support of field formations. Squadron primary task was to look after the Kashmir Sector.

The Operational Plan

7 Division was part of Army Strike Force, it had arrived in the area at 2340 hours 30 August 1965 and established its tactical headquarters at Jalalpur. At some stage it had to take over the operational charge from 12 Division.

H – Hour 0500 hours, 1st September 1965

Phase-1. Securing of the line River Munawar Tawi, with the destruction of enemy forces West of Tawi in Laleall, Dewa, Sakrana area by 4 Sector {ex-12 Division} and 102 Brigade {ex-7 Division}.

Phase-2. Capture of Akhnur by 10 Brigade Group {ex-7 Division}.

1st September 1965 a Historical Day

Lieutenant Colonel Mahmood, Commanding Officer 1 Squadron, carried out a dawn reconnaissance and gave orders for the occupation of a strip near village Guliana. The Squadron Headquarters and part of Flight No. 2 moved to Guliana

Commanding Officer 2 Army Aviation Squadron, Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Khan narrates:

“On 1st September 1965, I took-off from Dhamial very early and landed at Bhimber Strip at about 0530 hours, by that time Captain Anis was already airborne but could not engage any target due to poor visibility. On his return, I took-off along with Major Rabbani and on reaching the line of contact I saw own tanks, some bogged down on the left flank, while others in battle position on the right flank in front of Moel. There I recognized Brigadier Hameed, wearing steel helmet and holding field glasses while conducting the operation. He waved at us and we continued in the haze of war to pick up any worth while target. In the

meantime a message from 4 Corps Artillery came that Chamb had fallen and we were asked to confirm it.

I immediately changed my course and headed towards Chamb. I was following the track leading to Chamb from Moel. On the approach I saw a burnt- out jeep with some dead bodies around it but could not recognise them. However, as we approached nearer we came under heavy automatic fire. We informed the Artillery Headquarters but were told emphatically that these were own troops and would be directed not to shoot at own aircraft. This was actually an incorrect assessment, which later sadly resulted in destruction of own tanks. I wish credence had been given to our observation. To be sure we, then approached Chamb from the South and clearly observed two brick kilns on the South and South-East of it. The one on the right was almost on the river edge and the other was on the left of the road joining Munawar with Chamb. On reaching the top of them we saw huge stack of stores, ammunition boxes and other military equipment along with three or four 3-ton trucks and a tank in depression of the kiln. Further on the left I could see some recoilless anti-tank guns, very well camouflaged and facing our line of advance. We passed the information and wanted to engage them with artillery fire but were again stopped because of the earlier wrong information. After some time as we were running low on fuel, we landed back, and I rushed to the headquarters to brief them about the actual situation ”

Major Rabbani's Marathon Aerial Shoot

Major Rabbani was the first flight commander who operated in Indian Held Kashmir during 'Operation Gibraltar' and later during 'Operation Grand Slam' as well. No. 6 Flight (ex- 2 Squadron), was based at Gujrat Airfield for night and in the day it operated from Bhimber Strip. With the launching of operation 'Grand Slam' this flight was the first to get committed in the actual operations. On 1st September 1965, during the Battle of Chamb, enemy guns were hindering the advance of own forces, Major Rabbani soon after his first mission was again tasked to locate these guns. He narrates:

“While going around I saw some Indian Guns in action deployed in an island West of Tawi. The gun positions had a good crest due West and could only be seen from the South or while on top of it. Normal reaction would have been to go for the guns and silence them. But I decided to go first for the bivouac area and Wagon Lines. The aim was to capture the guns intact while making the enemy run; thus getting memorable war trophy, it might look strange today but forty years ago at the peak of my youth I had this idea. I called the artillery fire and while flying my L-19 in a pattern to avoid the enemy ground fire directed at me. In the bargain some vehicles exploded and apparently heavy casualties were inflicted on the enemy. Then necessary fire correction was given, soon guns and the entire area became a scene of destruction and confusion. The sortie lasted for about three hours and I returned fully satisfied.”

1 Army Aviation Squadron War Diary records.

“Earlier in the day Major Rabbani who was commanding No.6 Flight, took a very successful artillery shoot. Just East of Chamb on the western bank of Munawar Tawi, where he saw a concentration of enemy vehicles. Major Rabbani thus over rode caution and flew over head the guns and directed own fire to an extent that not only the guns were silenced but enemy fled leaving behind 14 guns just 1 mile North of Chamb. It later transpired that it was the Wagon Line of the enemy guns operating West of Munawar Tawi.”

Major Rabbani was later awarded with Sitara-e-Jurrah for this action. He rose to Lieutenant Colonel's rank and commanded 2 and 3 Army Aviation Squadrons.

COLONEL BABAR BAGS 55 SIKHS

Lieutenant Colonel Naseer Ullah Babar, Commanding Officer 3 Squadron on the same very day had flown towards the Kashmir Sector. He recalls {at Peshawar in 2004}:

“On 1st September 1965, as per recent pattern, I took Brigadier Ishaq the Sector Commander from Rawalpindi to Murree and onwards to Rawalakot. These were the initial days of helicopter flying thus currency and check-outs for mountain flying were also amalgamated into operational flying. I had three pilots in the other OH-13. On arrival at Murree, I learnt that Chamb had been attacked and our forces were outside Chamb. On reaching at Rawalakot, we heard the same news and kept hearing so while we were there till about mid-day. On completion of his work, I suggested to Brigadier Ishaq that we should visit Chamb and see what the impediment was. Brigadier Ishaq readily agreed and we departed for the brigade headquarters at Bhimber. On arrival, we heard the same news vis-à-vis Chamb. After a quick lunch we decided to make best use of the available hours and departed for Chamb. We were totally unprepared as we neither had weapons nor quarter inch maps. In order to ascertain the general direction of Chamb, in the absence of maps, we landed in the gun area, in Padhar Nullah. Brigadier Ishaq decided to go back and did so in the OH-13, now we were three pilots {myself, Major Latif Awan and Captain Akram} in the helicopter.

After having ascertained the general direction we took off for Chamb. It was getting late after noon. Soon we saw a post and I asked Major Latif Awan to land near it. Being an avid collector, the intent was to pick up a couple of weapons, from what we perceived was an abandoned post. Major Awan told me that it was getting late and we should indulge in the weapon picking later after our return from the forward area. While we were flying, we learnt on radio set ARC-44, that brigade commander, Brigadier (lieutenant general retired) Abdul Hamid Khan had been ambushed. I began to get in touch with the ground troops and asked them to direct the helicopter, if they could see it so that we could pick up the brigade commander. We flew in this manner for some time but failed to get any correct information about the location of the ambushed brigade commander, further the information about the ambush itself was confusing on the radio thus we decided to head back.

It was then that I saw the post again and told Awan to land. Since I was busy in conversation on radio with the ground troops, I did not see any personnel in the post. However, Major Awan informed me that there are apparently some men. Presuming that they must be dead/wounded, I asked him to land and on touching down I got out of the helicopter

along with Captain Akram and marched towards the post. As we got closer it dawned that it is a light machine gun out post. There were three Sikhs inside who were bewildered.

Had the Sikhs just pressed the trigger the story would have ended there. Why they failed was directly related to their low morale which had sapped their will to fight and what little they had was overawed by the helicopter and uniform.

He seldom flew in coverall

my Peak-Cap and stick must have been the last nails on the Sikhs imagination. It was no more 'souvenir hunting' now it was a matter of our survival. In a flash many thoughts occurred to me, the most paramount was the safety of my officers and helicopter. I had been at Dehra Dun where some of my best friends were Sikh officers, so I asked him in Punjabi about Colonel Sukhwant Singh which baffled the Sikhs. Before he could mentally assess the situation, I told him that your forces have surrendered and tribal lashkar is on its way, since I knew your Sikh officers and have served with First Sikh Battalion{a lie} therefore I have come to take surrender, thus ensuring your safety.

It was then that a Sikh soldier told us that there are large number of people in the Main Post, which was few hundred yards in the rear. By that time few Sikh soldiers from the Main Post all brandishing new rifles, some still having chindi in the muzzle, led by a Junior Commissioned Officer, joined in with quizzical looks towards the helicopter still with running rotors. Hats off to Captain Akram for keeping his nerves, he walked among these Sikhs as a conqueror. At that moment, I saw two Indian fighter aircraft heading towards the post (possibly having sighted the helicopter), they were coming in to attack. They made a pass over so as to align themselves for an attack. I immediately indicated to Major Awan about air threat and that he should take off. He did so just when the IAF aircraft were coming in for an attack. Simultaneously, some PAF Sabers also appeared on the scene. I knew that on the outcome of this dogfight rests the fate of myself and Captain Akram. Both the Indian aircraft were shot, the debris fell near the post. That sealed the fate of the Sikhs, had the result been other way around, I am sure they would have shot us than and there.

Keeping my nerves, I walked towards the Main Post led by the Sikhs through the minefield. Once inside the post I was informed that they had received some shelling in the morning and two jawans have been wounded (then dead) and that their company commander, Major Nagi had left them in the morning on pretext of getting supplies. I then realized that it was a Company Post of 5 Sikh Light Infantry with heavy weapons like 106 millimeters recoilless rifle, a mortar and medium machine gun detachment from a support battalion (pattern in Indian Army). I then asked them to place their weapons on the parapet and move out and kept pushing them, Captain Akram was of a great help in all this happening."

"Once they were out I asked the Junior Commissioned Officer{JCO} to "fall them in," he did so. I then asked two jawans to carry a rifle each. I told Captain Akram to take the wounded soldiers towards own area and also to inform and seek help from own formation, he was reluctant to leave me alone, but did as told."

Rest of Sikh Company was made to march under their own escorts with Lieutenant Colonel Babar in the rear pushing them. Mean while Captain Akram marched and after few miles came across own advancing troops, to whom he told all that had happened and got a jeep for the wounded prisoners. In the jeep still worried about his commanding officer, he inquired from the Sikhs, "Would your comrades dare to shoot my commanding officer?" The answer was a cheerful 'No'.

By now it was near nightfall, Lieutenant Colonel Babar further narrates, *"En route, I met Major (major general retired) Abdullah Saeed and asked him to relieve me of the burden, he refused. Moving on I met Major (lieutenant general retired) Faiz Ali Chishti, 2nd in Command of an artillery unit, I asked him for transport, he refused as they were re-deploying. We moved on and at nightfall reached Moel Post, there I informed them of the event and also asked them for some tea for the Prisoners of War{POWs} and informed Kharian (where Major Latif Awan had proceeded) that I was safe.*

After tea and in the dark (blessed it was the full moon) we moved towards Padhar. On arrival at Padhar (Corps Artillery Mess) at 2000 hours, I asked the POWs to sit in the volleyball ground and informed them that I was proceeding for dinner and that they would get their meal at Bhimber. When I entered the mess and informed Brigadier Amjad Chaudhry,{ Commander Corps Artillery) and his staff, they did not believe me and came out to see for themselves. After a quick dinner, I requested for transport as by now I was fairly tired having walked for 7-8 miles or more. I was once again refused and was informed that the vehicles would be free once the bridging equipment had been delivered at Tawi. At about 0230 hours, I was provided the transport and some munching for POWs, after which I asked them {POWs} to demonstrate their battalion embussing drill. They did so in exemplary fashion and we left for Bhimber.

At about 0500 hours, we arrived at Bhimber and the panic started about escorts/guard for the Sikhs prisoners. However, I handed them over to the brigade headquarters, after assuring them that I would look after their interest. I was picked up at 1000 hours, along with the souvenirs (two G-3 rifles) and returned to Dhamial to receive a dressing down from Colonel A.B Awan for having involved myself in the venture."

When the POWs were interrogated, they narrated the incident. Late General Riaz Hussain (the then Director General ISI) informed President Ayub Khan at a briefing in the evening on 2nd September 1965 and sought his permission to publish the item in the newspapers as it would raise morale of our troops. Resultantly, it was published in all newspapers on 4th September 1965. On same very day Lieutenant Colonel Babar was at Kharian Strip to take General Musa, who had arrived in the L-23 from Rawalpindi, onward to forward area. General Musa asked him if he had seen the days news papers.

Colonel Babar further narrates: I said, "No" and he asked me to get the newspapers from his L-23 aircraft. The newspapers carried the story. At that General Bakhtiar Rana gave me a dressing down that the army has spent so much money on my training and I was involving myself in such frivolous activity. I was awarded Sitara-e-Jurat for this action."

First Air Battle

Air Marshal Nur Khan, C-in-C PAF, arrived at Gujrat Airfield in a PAF aircraft. He was flown in an L-19 to the forward line of troops near Chamb. As soon as he landed back at Gujrat, the first ever dogfight between the IAF and the PAF aircraft started. {The one described by Lieutenant Colonel Babar}. At about 1600 hours on 1st September 1965, four enemy aircraft appeared and started attacking our ground troops. As these aircraft were in their attack runs, our fighters picked them up. Within a very short span of time all the four Indian aircraft were shot down. The thrilling encounter of the First Air Battle, was witnessed from an L-19 by Air Marshal Nur Khan, the C-in-C of PAF and Lieutenant Colonel MM Mahmood. Later Captain Askree, the pilot of OH-13 helicopter landed at one of the sites of the crash and picked up a piece of the wreckage. It was the insignia of the IAF. This was kept as a War Trophy.

2ND SEPTEMBER 1965- Major General Yahya Takes Over the Command

The operations in Chamb Sector were launched on 1st September 1965. By the afternoon the leading elements had reached Chamb. By the morning of 2nd September 1965, Chamb was captured, River Tawi was crossed and the enemy positions at Troti Feature and other resistant pockets were under attack.

General Musa, along with Major General A.A. Bilgrami arrived at Kharian. They were picked up by helicopters and brought to the tactical command post of 102 Brigade. Major General Yahya, General Officer Commanding 7 Division, was also there. As per original planning but much against his wishes Major General Akhtar Malik, was to hand over the command of the operation to Major General Yahya and re-assume command of his own 12 Division. Initially efforts failed to locate Major General Akhtar Malik and it was not feasible to pass him the orders on telephone. Captain Mir Saadat Ullah was personally briefed by the General Musa and was given a sealed envelope to be handed over to Major General Malik personally. Captain Saadat's only query from the C-in-C was regarding the disposal of the envelope in case of being shot down by the enemy. Captain Saadat landed the envelope at the designated area in L-19 amidst enemy fire. Later Major General Yahya, hurriedly held his 'O' {Orders} Group and gave orders to attack Troti Feature on first light of 4th September 1965.

By last light 2nd September 1 Army Aviation Squadron Headquarters, No. 2 and No.6 Flights were concentrated at Gujrat Airfield. A strip was marked on the taxi track. with night landing facilities available. The two flights were to operate during daylight from field strips in support of 7 Division and 4 Corps Artillery respectively and to fall back at Gujrat. Next day a strip was prepared after quite an effort in the North West of Jalalpur, to support 7 Division, Captain Mir Sadat Ullah and Captain Zafar Aqeel manned it, skelton squadron headquarters was also shifted there.

3RD SEPTEMBER 1965- Move of 2 Army Aviation Squadron-

In the morning C-in-C arrived again and was taken to the tactical headquarters at Chamb. The long awaited Warning Orders came around mid-day for the move of 2 Army

Aviation Squadron. It was Major Muhammad Ayub who rang up the adjutant and directed him to move one flight and the squadron headquarters as soon as possible. At 1445 hours 3rd September 1965, the ground party consisting of the squadron headquarters elements, No.7 Flight and the maintenance platoon from 199 Aviation Engineering Battalion left the Dhamial Base in a convoy, led by Captain Jamil of 199 Aviation Engineering Battalion, he had been attached as a maintenance officer. Air Party comprised of three officers and two aircraft. Major Muhammad Akhtar, the 2nd in command was the in-charge of the air party while Captains Jamil Akhtar Khalid and Muazzam Ali Shah were the other officers to follow. The Air Party landed at Kharian Strip approximately at 1900 hours. Major Mansoor Ahmad Sial was at the strip to receive them. At 2030 hours 3rd September 1965, the ground party also reached Kharian and soon the camp was established. Following helicopter pilots from 3 Army Aviation Squadron were placed under command 2 Army Aviation Squadron:-

Helicopter No. Pilot

135 Captain Siraj

139 Captain Manzoor Bajwa

132 Captain Sajjad Nazim

Captain Khalid Saeed Neutralises an Enemy Artillery Regiment

Towards the evening of 3rd September when the advance of own troops towards Jaurian was held up due to heavy enemy artillery fire, Headquarters 4 Corps Artillery gave Captain Khalid Saeed the mission to locate these guns. He observed that the fire was coming from a nullah near Kalit.

Immediately own guns were directed onto this area. After the ranging was complete and the 'fire for effect' was being ordered, a doubt arose in the minds of the staff of Headquarters 4 Corps Artillery. They somehow maintained that the reference being given by the pilot is incorrect. Own troops, as believed by them, had already crossed that line. But Captain Khalid Saeed still maintained that the fire which was holding the advance of own troops, was coming from that area.

To resolve the controversy Captain Khalid Saeed decided to fly to the area again to reconfirm as to whether they were the hostile guns or not? As he approached the area, he came under heavy enemy ground fire. A few bullets hit the left fuel tank of L-19 aircraft No. 57-5986, petrol gushed into the cockpit. Still unperturbed Captain Khalid Saeed, remained cool and calm despite risk of the aircraft catching fire. With singleness of purposes he called for 'fire for effect'. With most accurate observation of fire hostile guns were not only silenced but later the enemy fled, leaving guns behind. By the time pilot finished the shoot it became dark and he made emergency night landing at Gujrat Air Strip where arrangements had been made earlier. 1 Army Aviation Squadron, War Diary records this shoot in following words ``Captain Saeed set a pattern which was soon to become the by words for the squadron and adopted as the spirit in which all pilots operated later throughout the war``. The Squadron

observers role was complimented upon by Brigadier Chaudhry, Commander 4 Corps Artillery. He remarked that “As long as a pilot is up the enemy guns were silent.”

4TH SEPTEMBER 1965-

Army Aviation and Push towards Akhnur

Lieutenant Colonel Mahmood Commanding Officer 1 Army Aviation Squadron narrates: “Early morning of 4th September, Major General Yahya GOC 7 Division, flew with me and Captain Askree to Chamb and landed at the helipad. There Brigadier Amjad Chaudhry, the Commander Corps Artillery, briefed him that the Artillery Fire Plan was completed and since its lifting, no attack by the ground troops was launched by then. Major General Yahya was totally surprised at this. Brigadier Chaudhry suggested that aircraft should go up to see the effect of own fire over enemy positions and report if any movement was observed. I suggested that myself and Captain Askree would go forward and carryout a detailed aerial assessment of the situation.

Captain Askree and myself first landed near 3 Frontier Force Regiment just short of Troti Feature. I met Major Anwar-ul-Haq (N.D), the second in command of the battalion. He told me that the attack did not proceed as the ‘A’ Echelon of the battalion had lost its contact with the battalion headquarters. We next visited Brigadier Azmat, Brigade Commander of 10 Brigade. He explained that one of his Punjab Battalion, which was advancing along the river had lost its contact with the brigade headquarters and as such was not in a position to advance further. On the other side of Troti, we met Lieutenant Colonel Sher, Commanding Officer 13 Lancers. The tanks were lined up in a nullah and were not proceedings forward as there was fire coming from the Troti Feature. Further on to the left flank, we reached the headquarters of Brigadier Zafar Ali Shah. It was the same story of them showing their helplessness to start the advance. We told them that we had just flown over and around the Troti Feature, own artillery fire had already caused enormous damage and we further explained to them that small pockets of enemy are all that is still holding on.

We returned to the helipad at Chamb. Major General Yahya was anxiously waiting there and inquired about the situation. I briefed him about the position on the ground. We later flew out and met all the unit/formation commanders. In his typical style General Yahya told them that rather than attacking Troti and other pockets of resistance they should by pass those. From the right, Brigadier Azmat was ordered to by pass these positions through the gap from Troti and River Chenab. Brigadier Zafar Ali Shah was to by pass from the enemy left flank. Both brigades were ordered that after by passing Troti they should gallop towards Akhnur. Within a few hours Troti and other pockets were by passed and troops started their advance to Akhnur. By the time the troops reached the foot hills of Akhnur, it was dark and the L-19s could not support the efforts of the ground troops any more. The infantry units that reached there, after the full day’s advance, were handicapped in carrying out aggressive patrolling. They stayed short of the foot hills of Akhnur.

5th September 1965-Capture of Jaurian

Jaurian fell due to Pakistani assault launched at 0700 hours on 5th September 1965. With moving of 7 Division Headquarters to area Munawar, No. 2 Flight{1 Squadron} also moved forward. Since own forces had moved as far forward as Jaurian, own aircraft also started operating much beyond Jaurian, in fact in certain cases Akhnur was over flown. On the evening of 5th September 1965 Pakistan Army was only 4 miles short of Akhnur. After the fall of Jaurian Major Akhtar flew Lieutenant General Rana from Kharian to Lahore. From Lahore he{General Rana} was taken by a helicopter to the forward areas.

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17 DAYS OF SEPTEMBER 1965

Casus Belli

At 0300 hours on 6th September Indians delivered a riposte and launched attack across the international border towards Lahore. Indians aim was to divert our focus from Akhnur and make Pakistan react to this new situation. This move was not a surprise. Indian attack on 6th September, was well anticipated by our higher headquarters. 1 Corps had already informed formations under its command to be prepared to deploy at short notice, troops were dispersed by first light 2nd September. 15 Division was already ordered to take up defensive positions on 3rd September 1965. The events of last 9 months had prepared Pakistan for such eventuality.

Pakistan Army Dispositions

On the eve of war Pakistan Army was commanded by General Musa Khan

1 Corps (Army had only one corps at that time)

Corps Headquarters at Gujranwala Lieutenant General Bakhtiar Rana

7 Division at Jallalpur. Major General Yahya Khan

15 Division at Sialkot. Brigadier Ismail {Later Major General Tikka}

6 Armour Division at Daska. Major General Abrar Hussain Malik

(It had only one armour brigade)

General Headquarters' Formations

11 Division at Kasur. Major General Hamid

10 Division at Lahore. Major General Sarfraz

12 Division at Murree Major General Akhtar Ali Malik

1st Armour Division at Raiwind. Major General Nasir

18 Division in Sind. Major General Azhar

4 Corps Artillery. Brigadier Amjad

Army Aviation Assets

Army Aviation at that stage consisted of a base headquarter and three squadrons - 1, 2 & 3 Army Aviation Squadrons. The entire Army Aviation had an integrated maintenance & logistic support, consisting of 199 Aviation Electrical Mechanical Engineers Battalion, and an Ordnance Depot. Colonel A B Awan was commanding the Dhamial Base, in the last days of the war, he was posted to command Artillery Brigade and was replaced by Colonel Jabbar. In the General Headquarters Lieutenant Colonel Saleem Ullah was the Principal Staff Officer on aviation matters, his General Staff Officer, Grade – 2, Major Wali; was at Army Tactical Headquarters at Kharian. Additionally four Beaver aircraft were requisitioned from Plant Protection Department for war effort. On the onset of the war Army Aviation did not possess the capability of night operations, it also lacked the requisite communication sets to act as Forward Air Controller and neither it had any aerial fire power. All aviation resources to field formations were controlled by the Chief of General Staff{CGS}. There were total of 63 pilots available including those performing staff work as well. Three OH-13(S) helicopters were unserviceable due to non availability of spares.

Despite all this the positive aspect was that all the commanding officers and pilots had a long period of mutual understanding among each other. They all had bond of instructor-student relationship, they knew each other's weak and strong points. Thus there was a sense of harmony from top to bottom. In the end this proved to be the decisive factor.

Aviation Redeployment

With the Indian invasion of Pakistan on night 5/6 September 1965, in Wagah area, the entire complexion changed resulting in fresh deployment of the fleet of army aircraft. This move was in conjunction with the move of certain field formations.

1 Army Aviation Squadron - Lieutenant Colonel M.M. Mahmood- In support of 6, 7 and 15 Division.

Under Command: No. 6 Flight ex-2 Army Aviation Squadron, and one flight of OH – 13(S) helicopters ex- 3 Army Aviation Squadron. The squadron supported the operations in Sialkot Sector, its flights were located at Sialkot, Adamke, Pasrur and Gujrat. During the course of battle in this Sector the flights shifted their locations. Company of 199 Electrical Mechanical Engineers Battalion was located at Sambrial to support the Squadron.

2 Army Aviation Squadron - Lieutenant Colonel Mohammad Khan. In support of 1 Corps, 1 Armoured Division, 10 and 11 Divisions. Its No.6 Flight was later reverted from 1 Squadron. It also had one flight of helicopters under its command.

Squadron moved from Kharian to Rahwali Strip at 1845 hours 6th September, next day at 0445 hours they flew to the football ground of Government High School Gujranwala. The

airstrip was prepared on the night of 6th September concealed by high trees on both sides. The mess was located in a temple. Its flights were distributed as under:-

No.7 Flight.Major Taleh Mohammad Mian,got entrenched at Walton in support of 10 Division.

No.8 Flight. Major Mansoor Sial to support 11 Division at Lulliani. Two Sections with Captain Sheraz and Captain Hamid Chaudhry were sent to Sulemanki to support the operations there.

No.9 Flight.At Chander Airfield under command Major Hissam,consisting of Captain Zafar and Captain Nouman, was placed to support 1 Armoured Division.

Squadron Headquarters along with one composite flight consisting of three helicopters and two sections of L-19 at Gujranwala.

3 Army Aviation Squadron - Lieutenant Colonel Naseer Ullah Babar

The only Rotary Wing Squadron. Its two flights were detached to the Fixed Wing Squadrons, one flight remained at Dhamial to support the efforts in Azad Kashmir area.

199 Electrical Mechanical Engineers Battalion -Lieutenant Colonel Saeed Qadir. One company was located at Sambrial, other at Gujranwala, few elements were also present at Gujrat, and Multan. At Baghatanwala, Forward Base was also established, Major Aftab and Major Burki were there.

Indian Army - Order of Battle (ORBAT)

The Indian Army had eleven divisions and three independent brigades. Senior Indian officers were:-

Chief of Army Staff - General J.N. Chaudhry

Western Command Lieutenant General Harbaksh Sing

1 Corps -Lieutenant General P.O. Dunn {Sialkot Sector}.

1 Armoured Division, 14 Division,16 Division and 26 Division,

XI Corps -Lieutenant General J.S. Dhillon { Lahore Sector}.

4 Mountain Division,7 -15 Infantry Division, and 2 Independent Armoured Brigade.

XV Corps Lieutenant General K.S. Katock {Kashmir}

6 Mountain Division,10 and 11 Infantry Division.

Reserves.19-25-26 Infantry Divisions, 68 Independent Infantry Brigade and 121 Independent Infantry Brigade.

Note: Indians did not had independent Air Arm for army, they had few Auster aircraft and helicopters for Artillery Fire Observation but they were all manned and controlled by IAF.

Birds Eye View of the War

The September War was mainly fought in Lahore-Kasur-Sialkot Sector with subsidiary efforts taking place in Sulemanki and Kashmir Sectors. Kashmir remained relatively calm with fighting for passes and posts in a prolonged time frame. War had three distinct phases:

Phase 1 (6-8 September 1965)

Indian X1 Corps mounted three-pronged offensive on 50 miles, Lahore - Kasur Sector. Indian 15, 7 and 4 Division launched the attacks, which were all blunted by our 10 and 11 Divisions. Indians also launched simultaneous attack towards Sialkot Sector. Own forces remained in defensive posture and some bold acts coupled with luck ensured that Indian attack should run out of the steam after 48 hours. Own 105 Brigade launched attack and captured Indian posts in Suleimanke Sector.

Phase 2 (8-12 September 1965)

Pakistan riposte with the rolling off of 1st Armoured Division poised for Amritsar, its initial success was heartening. Indians responded by employing elements of their strike force, the 1st Armoured Division in the Sialkot Sector, where own 15 Division and 6 Armoured Division {only two tank regiments} held the fort, at times outcome hanging by thread.

Phase 3 (13-17 September 1965)

Fierce tank battles raged in Philloura - Chawinda area. The attacker (Indian Forces) throwing in every thing and the defender (Pakistani Forces) holding every inch. Own 1st Armoured Division was also rushed in there, from Kasur Sector. In the dying moments of the war, Indians made moves to recapture lost territories in Kasur, Sulemanki and desert area without success.

Army Aviation Support in Kashmir Sector

On the night of 5th September 1965, Major Tirmzi (retired as Director Aviation and is presently settled in Chaklala. He and his wife are contributing significantly on the social service and running excellent schools for the needy in and around Rawalpindi) being a neighbour of Lieutenant Colonel Naseer Ullah Babar, got a chit as per routine of last few days, that he had to go to Jura Sector for casualty evacuation. There were 8-10 casualties and three helicopters were detailed. Next morning Tirmzi took off with Captains Sagheer and Zia Ud Din Javeed in helicopters No. 144, 142 and 143. They carried out refuelling at Muzzaffarabad. On reaching Jura {Titwal Sector} they found that instead of 8 casualties they

had to evacuate more than 20. It was at Muzzafarabad, Tirmzi got the news that India had attacked Lahore, now its an all out war.

Major Tirmzi recalls almost 38 years later, “I briefed Captain Sagheer on the situation and decided to fly low and on the home bank, to get the casualties from Jura, pilots had to initially fly along the Kishen Ganga upto Danni, and then steep climb to 9,500 feet so as to cross Chunj Feature. On the far side, pilots were required to rapidly descend down in area Choa Ghali as the height of Jura is only 4000 feet. For the return journey with a full load of two litters, pilots had to execute two 360 degrees turns to attain the necessary height, these turns are in full view of Sanjoi Feature and Mirpur Ridge with enemy observing. In the end pilots evacuated all casualties despite coming under enemy fire.

On 7th September Captain Akram and Captain Naeem flew to Rawalakot in helicopters No. 142 and 143, they evacuated 8 casualties. To ensure maximum utilization they also carried 400 pounds of rations for the posts on the return journey. Similar missions were also flown on 8th and 9th September. On 9th, Captain Akram evacuated 6 casualties from Palangi, in order to reach the area from Bagh pilot had to cross Toli Pir Feature 8,000 feet high and then descend down in full view of the enemy position. Enemy had recorded the pattern of our flying, they shelled the helipad but Captain Akram evacuated the casualties right through the fire.

On 16th September Colonel A B Awan was posted to command Artillery 12 Division for likely offensive, he was dropped at Murree in a helicopter, his subsequent reconnaissance of the area along with other commanders was facilitated by the 3 Army Aviation Squadron pilots.

On 22nd September major casualty evacuation missions were carried out involving 3x OH 13(S), crew included Captain Akram, Major Awan and Captain Sagheer. Aviators evacuated 12 casualties from Badhal, in view of the conditions of patients they were brought to Rawalpindi Combined Military Hospital despite having low fuel warning.

On 23rd September, the last day of the war, Captain Sagheer and Major Awan were involved in the operation in area Badhal and Palanghi in 2 Sector (AK). This last mission was carried out in the face of enemy's small arms fire.

Lahore-Kasur Sector

Captain Sirajuddin of 3 Army Aviation Squadron flew General Rana, the Corps Commander from Gujranwala to Lahore and then to Kasur on the evening {1600 hours} of 6th September, in OH-13(S) helicopter. This allowed the commander to have first hand knowledge of the situation. Pilot flew low from Lahore to Kasur, the General wanted to fly as close to the forward lines as possible. Visibility was not that clear, however they could see the smoke and fire en-route. Pilot recalls “My main concern was own artillery fire. We were not in communication with the ground troops, further more in case of crash it would have been a great loss to lose the commander so early. He was carrying important documents including the Corps Operational Instructions.” They landed safely at Kasur.

2 Army Aviation Squadron's flight under Major Taleh Mian was at Walton Airfield. Divisional Headquarters {HQ} was in the out skirts. At Lahore, on the very first day, Air OPs

were to concentrate observation in area Rampur for which they were also provided with quarter inch scale map sheets. Flying was conducted at low level. On 7th September, Major Taleh Mian and Captain Jawahar were chased by the Indian aircraft. Next day Captain Ishaq faced the same scenario. For coming days pattern remained the same. For Artillery shoots pilots had to carry extra radio set for communicating with the guns. Aviators daily had to go to respective HQ for briefing and debriefing, it was a time consuming exercise. Aviation efforts were tasked by the respective Colonel Staffs,.

Aviation Support to 105 Infantry Brigade

This Brigade was located at Haveli and was assigned to look after the Suleimanke Head Works. The very first attack of the war on Indians was launched by this Brigade at 1830 hours on 6th September, spearheaded by 10 Punjab and 4 Punjab supported by 32 Medium Regiment. By 1850 hours Sadiqia and Jhanger Posts were captured. On 8th September at 1020 hours brigade requested Military Operation Directorate for an Air OP Flight.

On 9th morning Captain Hamid Choudhry arrived from Lahore with his L-19 and established strip in Okara Military Dairy Farms area. On 10th September according to Brigade War Diary, they received a message from GHQ; "Use L-19 in your own area, keeping in view its limitation. No un-necessary risk." On 14th September Captain Khalid Kamal {KK} also joined in with another L-19. Both the pilots carried out aerial surveillance and took artillery shoots. They used air bursts as well to disperse enemy infantry hiding in village. Both pilots along with maintenance crew remained at Haveli Strip till 4th October 1965.

In the Support of Mailed Fist

One flight of 2 Army Aviation Squadron was in support of 1st Armoured Division. One of the best kept secrets of the war, was the location of this Mailed Fist. Captain Zafar {later brigadier retired} writes, "On the evening of 6th September, Major Hissam, and my self were ordered to move to Chander Airfield, in support of 1st Armoured Division. When we arrived there from Kharian in our L-19s, there was no one there except few scattered logistic elements. We again flew in search of division, to the place we were told by the staff officers. We could not locate it and came back to Chander; here we spent the night in open with our aircraft. Next morning we were given the wake up call by the four low level Indian jets heading for Sargodha.

We hurriedly put our L-19s under trees, soon the Indians came back, I counted and they were two aircraft short, it raised our morale. We were stranded here at Chander with no communication and decided at our own to fly towards Changa Manga Forest, to locate the Armoured Division, it was not there, we remained in air for over three hours and finally landed back at Chander where we received a message to proceed to Walton."

On 7th September 1965 own 11 Infantry Division launched attack for the capture of Khem Kharan and Valthoa. 1st FF and 6 Lancers reached Khem Karan by last light. On 8th September, 6 Lancers captured Valthoa Railway Station and 24 Cavalry reached village Asal

Uttar, later to fall back on orders to Leaguer at Khem Karan. In the afternoon of 8th September, Chief of the General Staff {CGS} Major General Sher Bahadur was flown from Kharian to Kasur by Captain Siraj in an OH-13. Captain Siraj had to make few landings to facilitate the CGS for update from ground commanders. There were Indian jets in the air also. The ground formations were constantly moving and changing their positions thus it was an effort to locate the desired commander, so fluid was the battle. At 2300 hours CGS and Major General Hameed flew back from Khem Karan to Luliani. It was Captain Siraj's first nocturnal cross-country mission. He writes, "Noise of the helicopter created a lot of fire works and illuminated the battle field area. The helicopter lights were switched off completely and the tracers fired eased navigation to the destination." The helicopter later went back to Lahore.

Battle of Asal Uttar

On 9th September 1965, own Armoured Division initiated break-out across Rohi Nullah. Indians hastily occupied defensive positions around Asal Uttar & Cheema Village, the main hurdle in our thrust towards Amritsar. Advance Landing Ground {ALG} was established on the East of Rohi Nullah near Tactical Headquarters 11 Division.

Captain Zia ud din narrates: "On 9th September, myself and Major General Hamid played hide and seek with 4 Indian Hunters for nearly seven minutes. Indians were after the Bridge Head of 11 Infantry Division and 1st Armoured Division. Captain Asghar Aziz was also attached with 1st Armoured Division with his OH-13. On 9th September when the all-important battle across Rohi Nullah was about to take place he undertook route reconnaissance with Lieutenant Colonel Altaf Hussain of 1st Engineers Battalion for the leading 4 Brigade along Axis Rohi Nullah. They were almost seven miles ahead of own leading tanks when three Indian tanks astride the axis opened machine gun fire. During this sortie landings were made to check the soil and unattended Indian bridging equipment was also inspected. He further undertook a sortie with Brigadier Lumb for getting first hand information.

On the same day in the battle for Asal Uttar Village, it had been planned that 4 Armoured Brigade would out flank the Indian positions from the north west and then cut them off in the rear. 4 Cavalry led the advance but lost its way and was duly placed on the correct axis by Major General Naseer, GOC 1st Armoured Division, from the helicopter in which he was monitoring the advance. Early in the morning Major Hissam and Captain Raza flew towards Khem Karan. They saw own tanks crossing over Rohi Nullah and few getting bogged down. They then had the radio communication with the ground troops.

Artillery 1st Armoured Division's War Diary records: "Divisional Artillery engaged targets called by Air OP, registration of some important targets was also carried by Air OP on the orders of the commander."

Landing at Khem Karan

On 10th September 4 Cavalry was at Mile Stone-32 on Kasur- Amritsar Road where it suffered heavy losses. Enemy regained it's balance and fierce tank battles were fought.

Two L-19s piloted by Major Hissam, Captain Zafar and Captain Nouman landed at Khem Karan Strip, they reported to General Officers Commanding 11 Division and 1st Armoured Divisions. Captain Zafar writes: "Infantry had gone across the Khem Karan but tanks had been very gradual in crossing the Bridge Head. Enemy was bringing concentrated artillery fire and regular air sorties over the Bridge Head. We flew in between and engaged enemy positions with own Artillery guns. At dusk we flew back to Walton."

By 11th September own armoured attack had lost its momentum and simultaneously the reports from Pasrur Sector had forced the necessary redeployment of strike force, however, another major battle took place when Indians realizing this move, mounted an attack on 11th September whose brunt was borne by the 21 Brigade. Battlefield was kept under surveillance from dawn to dusk by the L-19s and OH-13.

Indian Counter Attack

On the morning of 12th September 1965 major Indian counter attack towards Bridge Head came in full swing. The Air OPs were in the air. Their efforts were recorded by War Diary of 1st Armoured Division as under;

"Air OP had been flying reconnaissance missions since early morning. At 0800 hours, Air OP reported considerable vehicular traffic on Road Asal Uttar-Valtoha, targets were engaged with field and medium artillery guns."

"At 0900 hours, some tanks were observed moving in general area Asal Uttar and were engaged by Air OP."

"At 1000 hours Air OP reported concentration of tanks and approximately one battalion plus of infantry in general area Asal Uttar, forming up for the attack. It was bombarded with 21 Medium Regiment. Visibility improved at 1100 hours, Air OP reported seeing 17 tanks{later reported to be considerably more}and numerous enemy dead in Mile Stone-36 and Mile Stone-38 area."

Brigadier Zafar recalling above event narrates, "Shoot was carried out for 2 hours and 30 minutes. Own artillery fire was very effective, damaging about 20 enemy vehicles some were carrying the fuel and ammunition, few were seen burning. Three tanks were also disabled. Enemy withdrew towards Valtoha."

Capture of Lieutenant Colonel Anant Singh

On 12th September 1965 few troops of the Sikh Battalion had successfully infiltrated through our lines and were poised to encircle the 3 Self Propelled {3SP} Artillery Regiment's guns area. As own Air OP was already monitoring the area thus pilots reported about the scattered movement of the enemy, eventually the Sikhs were hauled by the 15 Lancers Squadron, commanded by Major Mokeet and battery of 3 SP. Later own helicopter being

flown by Captain Zia along with Lieutenant Colonel Karim as observer were tasked to provide aerial escort. 1st Armoured Division War Diary records; “At 1100 hours Air OP reported battalion attack from the right flank, on guns area of 3 Self Propelled Regiment. The regiment was alerted and the enemy was surrounded and 136 POWs were captured including their Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Anant Singh.

The Second Indian Wave

1st Armoured Division’s War Diary further records that epic day, “At 1500 hours, Air OP reported approximately a squadron of tanks and some infantry in Mile Stone -36. General Officer Commanding was informed about this. Target was engaged and dispersed. Intercepted enemy wireless indicates that the H-Hour was disrupted due to Air OP. “At 1700 hours Air OP again pointed out the tank squadron and infantry advancing towards Mile Stone-27 from Mile Stone-36. Air OP now reports advance of two more squadrons of tanks and some infantry in Mile Stone-36 area. At once guns put down heavy concentration of fire controlled by Air OP, wireless intercept revealed that enemy infantry was unwilling to resume the advance.”

The Indian attack which had fizzled out on 12th September 1965 still carried on till 14th September. On 13th September according to Captain Zafar. “Whole day we carried out battlefield surveillance by then perhaps it was decided to halt the operations in this sector. On 14th morning our original flight of Major Hissam, Captain Nouman, Captain Khalid Kamal and myself, was ordered to move back to Gujranwala and join 2 Army Aviation Squadron. Whereas Lieutenant Colonel M M Karim with 2 Squadron’s Flight consisting of Major Taleh Mian, Captain Ishaq and Captain Ali Jawahar stayed back at Lahore to support 11 Division.

11 Division’s War Diary

11 Division Artillery was coordinating the flying of 2 Army Aviation Squadron their War Diary reveals following tasks given to the pilots;

“On the night of 13/14 September 11 Division Artillery ordered first light Air OP sorties to observe enemy movement around Hussainiwala Head works. “At 1530 hours 11 Division’s Operations Room was informed that large forward movement of vehicles was reported from Bhikkiwind – Khem Karan Bridge. Air OP was tasked to carry out surveillance at once of these areas.”

“At 0830 hours on 16th September enemy radar at Ferozepur Landing Ground became active, Air OP was sent and the radar was engaged with 35 Heavy Artillery Regiment.”

“At 1030 hours on 16th September enemy moved his tanks from direction of Gaiwind Jhaman towards BRB, four Sherman tanks got bogged down, Air OP engaged and two tanks were destroyed.”

“At 0730 hours on 17th September Commander Artillery passed following instructions:-

“Enemy is bound to put up a major attack, to deny the engagement of Rohi Nullah Bridge to enemy medium guns Air OP will take on positions becoming active south of Dibbi Pura as a priority one task.”

“At 0830 hours on 18th September - “Air OP engaged concentration of enemy tanks and vehicles on track Ghawind-Jhaman, one tank was seen burning.”

“On 21st September Air OP carried observed shooting of enemy tanks and soft vehicles in area Rajkoo and Wan.”

SIALKOT SECTOR

On the first light of 6th September 1965 Commanding Officer 1 Army Aviation Squadron, who had stayed the night at the Headquarters 7 Division at Chak Pandit where his No. 2 Flight was supporting the 7 Division operations (only flight to operate from held territory), was going to the mess to have his breakfast, when General Officer Commanding 7 Division came rushing out of his caravan. On seeing Lieutenant Colonel Mahmood, General Yahya told that the C-in-C General Musa was on the line a short while ago. He{General Musa} had just told me that the Indians had attacked Pakistan across the International Border. The attack had come at the Jassar Bridge, Burki and Kasur Sector. General Yahya further told that C-in-C had informed him that the enemy had captured Jassar Bridge. Before deciding to rush in some reinforcements or to organize a full-fledged counter attack, a clarification was very much needed.

1 Army Aviation Squadron Readjusts

On the same very day {i.e. 6th September} Major Latif the No. 1 Flight commander of 1 Squadron at Dhamial, was told to proceed to Sialkot. No. 3 Flight of 1 Army Aviation Squadron commanded by Major Hissam was ordered to report to 2 Army Aviation Squadron at Kharian in lieu of No. 6 Flight which was under command 1 Squadron, they were also told to leave two aircraft (piloted by Captain Anwar and Lieutenant Qasim) at Bhimber in support of No. 4 Sector. No. 6 Flight was initially moved to Gujrat and then to Adamke on Daska-Sambrial Road to support 4 Corps Artillery and 6 Armoured Division. Lieutenant Colonel M M Mahmood flew back to his squadron headquarters at Lakhnwal in helicopter, which was under enemy air attack.

Jassar Bridge

Lieutenant Colonel M M Mahmood along with his second-in-command, Major Nazir and adjutant, Captain Khalid Kamal immediately took off to confirm news about Jassar Bridge. Short of Jassar, adjutant was told to land at Sialkot for latest update from Headquarters 15 Division. Commanding officer and second-in-command flew over the Jassar Bridge, they flew low to clearly see the fighting taking place across the bridge beyond our

enclave on the Indian side of the bridge. They flew over the positions of own 115 Brigade. The close aerial view gave a very re-assuring picture. The bridge was intact and in firm control of own brigade. Later this news was conveyed to General Officer Commanding 15 Division, Brigadier Ismail and Colonel Staff 15 Division, Colonel Mehdi after landing at Sialkot.

At Tactical Headquarters 7 Division at Chak Pandit, Major General Yahya was waiting very anxiously for the news. When informed that his appreciation of own strength at Jassar was correct and that the bridge was intact, he very excitedly exclaimed, “ Did not I tell you that?” He further informed that he as General Officer Commanding 15 Division had walked the entire area on foot and conceived and planned the defensive plan of the area to the minutes details. Emphatically he explained that the logical line of the enemy attack would be on Charwa-Chobara- Phillorah -Chawinda Axis.

It was further revealed that on 5th September a Despatch Rider{DR} of the enemy was captured by 15 Division. In the mail being carried by the DR, there were some letters addressed to the Indian 1st Armoured Division. Colonel Staff gave some important letters and documents in support of it to the Commanding Officer of 1 Army Aviation Squadron and asked him to fly those out to General Headquarters. It was done promptly. General Headquarters now had the information on 6th September that Indian 1st Armoured Division was in the area Samba. But there were some apprehensions, lest it was a ploy.

24 Brigade along with 25 Cavalry had been positioned in area Charwa as part of the defensive plan of 15 Division. They were the committed reserves of the division. But because of the conflicting and confusing picture emerging at Jassar, by the evening of 6th September, 24 Brigade minus 3 Frontier Force Regiment{FF} and 25 Cavalry had been ordered to move to the area Jassar for any possible counter attack. The sensitive corridor of Maharajke-Charwa- Chobara had been denuded of troops.

On the night of 6-7 September 1965, enemy moved in this sector, the entire area which was the defensive position of 24 Brigade Group, was held by 3 FF Regiment. 1 Army Aviation Squadron's War Diary records, “ 7 September 1965.No. 2 Flight was reporting increasing enemy activity in area Charwa-Chaubara. Indians having captured a firm base in area Charwa, had now broken through,with armoured formations.” “24 Brigade Group had been moved towards Jassar the previous evening. The whole sector right from Phillaura-Chawinda-Pasrur had practically no troops, situation most confusing, enemy out of reach of our guns.”

There was not much activity in the way of adjustment of artillery fire. This was essentially so because the units of 4 Corps Artillery kept shuttling between Pasrur and Narowal in response to the confusing picture at Jassar.

Maharajke-Sialkot Axis

In the evening of 7th **September** 15 Division asked for a sortie of the L-19 aircraft along the International Border. Orders were given that without crossing the boundary the area across the Indian side should be observed. The Army Aviator was to specifically look for any

major concentrations and movements of the enemy in the area. Captain Niazi was detailed on this mission. He flew all along the boundary from Sialkot all the way to River Chenab. He noticed no movement or concentration of the enemy. He went to Headquarters 15 Division and briefed Colonel Staff, Colonel Mehdi. At mid night 7th September a call came from Headquarters 15 Division, Colonel Mehdi told commanding officer 1 Army Aviation Squadron that enemy had launched its attack. The main axis was Gadgor-Charwa-Chobara-Phillaurah.

Commanding Officer detailed Captain Niazi to fly on first light 8th September to confirm these news. He was also told to observe the strength and the direction of the enemy attack. Captain Niazi again flew along the boundary from Sialkot all the way to River Chenab. He noticed no movement or concentration of the enemy. Pilot recalls "I crossed the border about 10 miles deep into the Indian territory but still could not locate any enemy armour. Must say they were well camouflaged." On his way back, ground controller warned him that Indian fighter aircraft were crossing back into India from the same direction. He was flying at 100 feet Above ground level. Pilot narrates "The next moment these were over me. To escape, I pushed my aircraft towards the ground. As I had gone into nose dive my controls became ineffective. The earth was fast coming towards me and I prayed, "Oh God! Don't let me die a useless death, I have yet not seen any action?" Sure! Allah heard it and responded; the nose of the aircraft picked up a little and he made a smooth half loop at tree top level. That was his first brush with death and both made friends. Captain Niazi did not abandon the task given to him. He again flew to area Maharajke where he noticed an enemy column of tanks moving towards Sialkot, on the track Maharajke - Sialkot. He saw the leading tank reach the vicinity of Aik Nadi near Faizabad. Major General {retired} Niazi writes; "I was on the reconnaissance mission and I saw 15-16 tanks moving from Charwa towards Sialkot. For positive identification I flew low over these tanks. These tanks opened up with their 50 mm machine guns. I could feel that bullets were hitting the aircraft around the wings and fuselage and the fuel also started to leak. I continued to fly and communicated enemy location to the base. I landed back. The aircraft had received 32 bullets, how did these missed me is again a miracle?". Captain Niazi returned to Sialkot Strip and gave the news to Colonel Staff 15 Division personally. 15 Division immediately sent some anti tank weapons to Aik Nadi. As the enemy tanks arrived near Aik Nadi, these weapons{RR} fired upon them. Under the fire they returned. Bullet ridden aircraft was later flown by Major Burki for repairs at Dhamial.

Chawinda- Phillaurah Axis

Indian move on Maharajke-Sialkot axis turned out to be a diversionary move. But where was the main attack coming from? On 8th September 1965, commanding officer and second-in-command of 1 Army Aviation Squadron flew out in a L-19. They first reached Chawinda and then started flying towards Phillaurah. There were no signs of any of our troops on the ground,. It was clear that 24 Brigade Group had not yet arrived back in that area. At a distance they saw a cloud of dust on the track Charwa-Chobara-Phillaurah. charging along that track towards Phillaurah at a high speed. Suddenly the second-in-command gave a shout of bandits to the commanding officer on the wireless. The L-19 was

already flying low and the pilot braced himself for any evasive action that might be required. Suddenly he saw those aircraft diving towards the enemy column. The rockets fired were very accurate and a number of enemy vehicles were seen on fire. There were puffs of fire and smoke coming out every time these aircraft were diving in their attack runs and firing their rockets. There was a great excitement and the sight was very re-assuring. The pounding of our Air Force on the attacking columns of enemy armour had its telling effect. Between 10-15 of the enemy armoured vehicles were on fire. The attack had halted and the enemy tanks and other vehicles were hurriedly dispersing. Enemy again started its dash soon after the air attack was over. About twenty AMX tanks in line astern were charging towards the Phillaura, they by passed it and headed for Chawinda. The L-19 kept flying alongside the Indian advancing armoured vehicles and tanks. The need for integral fire support capability with the Army Aviation was never so acutely felt before. So far there was no resistance or opposition to the Indian advance on the ground. Suddenly from the direction of Chawinda signs of movement on the ground appeared, they were our own Patton tanks of 25 Cavalry. It was reminiscences of charge of Light Brigade at Balaclava. After a short but fierce fight the advancing Indian columns turned around on the same track that they came on.

Lieutenant Colonel Mahmood flew back to Sialkot and went straight to Headquarters 15 Division. His arrival was most anxiously awaited. The first accurate news and account of the arrival of 24 Brigade Group in the area of Chawinda, brought a sign of relief. The account of rapid thrust of the Indian columns, the action of own Air Force, the enemy re-grouping and resumption of advance to Chawinda and the climax of sudden appearance of own Patton tanks, was both chilling and exhilarating. Later captured Operational Orders of Indian 17 Cavalry revealed that 17 and 16 Cavalry were part of Indian Armoured Division. Whole operation had been stalled within 3-4 miles of launching by 24 Infantry Brigade and notably by 25 Cavalry Regiment. Commanding Officer 25 Cavalry, Lieutenant Colonel Nisar was later awarded Sitara-e-Jurrat. Later these papers were handed over to Captain Askree for onward deliverance to General Headquarters. Command of 15 Division was also handed over to Major General Tikka. For the second time in two days, the accurate and authentic information provided by Army Aviation proved salutary. The first regarding Jassar Bridge the second one about 24 Brigade

9th September was relatively quiet. The enemy was licking his wounds inflicted by PAF and 25 Cavalry. The 4 Corps Artillery covered the entire front, stretching from Badiana to Deg Nadi (Zafarwal) and beyond. Any enemy attack or manoeuvre would immediately attract the fire of nearly ninety guns, field, medium and heavy calibre. 2 Army Aviation Squadron's War Diary records: "Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Khan took off at 0500 hours with Captain Muazzam to cooperate with Headquarters 15 Division for Artillery shoots. Enemy air force was active against them and they were also fired upon by the ground enemy guns. "On the evening of 9th September, 24 Brigade Group positions were attacked by the enemy tanks and infantry, it was repulsed by the 25 Cavalry supported by Artillery, Air OP also conducted shoots during its defensive action.

Air Control Team (ACT) Radio Sets in L-19

Army Aircraft did not have the requisite radio sets to communicate with the PAF jets at the start of war. It was Colonel Muhammad Khan's brain child to use the army aircraft fitted with ACT sets. 6 Armoured Division had only six sets out of which, two were out of action from the start, two were with Army Aviation, one was unserviceable and one was with the Divisional Headquarters. On 8th September Division Headquarters handed over two VRC-24 radio sets to 2 Army Aviation Squadron. Captain Jamil and Major Akhtar flew from Gujranwala and brought them back. They were fitted in aircraft and later one was handed over to No. 6 Flight at Sialkot.

The sets did not respond as desired, therefore on 9th September Captain Muazzam flew with a signal technician from Gujranwala to Sialkot and landed back at 0100 hours with news of good communication established. Next day at 0445 hours Captain Jamil and Captain Sajjad took off for Sialkot from Gujranwala to hand over the sets fitted in L-19 to the flight. It was still dark at the strip, when pilots came for landing they hit the embankment and crashed. Set VRC 24 was brought back to Gujranwala and fitted in other aircraft and flown back to Sialkot at 1000 hours same day another aircraft stalled and crashed at Adamke Strip with Major Rabbani and Captain Nagy on board.

11th September 1965-Gadogar

By first light 11th September 1965 the full weight of the Indian Armoured Division's attack came at Gadgor. The Gadgor and Phillaurah positions were overrun by the advancing enemy armour. To stem the enemy advance, Guides Cavalry counter attacked and relieved pressure on 11 Cavalry. With the counter attack of Guides Cavalry from the location at Rakh Baba Bhure Shah towards Bhagowal and Phillaurah, an intense tank battle ensued. The Army Aviators were operating on the wireless nets of the artillery formations. This was only useful for quick adjustment of artillery fire. There was no direct contact with own armour and infantry units. The information to our field units had to be relayed through the artillery nets. Sometimes it caused delays and on occasions confusion. There were queries and counter queries, to clear the conflicting interpretations and descriptions. War Diary of 2 Squadron records: "They {pilots} returned in the evening bringing back the news of heavy fighting in Sialkot Sector. Many enemy tanks were damaged and other military equipment and vehicles destroyed. Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Khan with artillery fire blew two enemy tanks up, Major Akhtar and Captain Muazzam claimed another one. Good job done by our bold pilots."

12th September 1965-OH-13 Shot Down-

Soon after sunrise, Captain Bajwa of 3 Squadron attached with 2 Squadron, landed at the Headquarters 6 Armoured Division in Sialkot Sector. The pilot waited for the early morning briefing / conference to end. At about 0730 hours the conference ended and the G-1 Operations Lieutenant Colonel Nazir Ahmed came to the chopper and told the pilot to start up. The pilot paused and requested for some briefing regarding the mission. Overwhelmed with some urgency he said that he would guide the pilot and that he should first land at Chawinda, where he shall be briefed before proceeding to the tank regiment at Phillora. The

pilot inquired if the regiment had been informed about their arrival. The G-1 briefed an officer to pass the message on the wireless and advise them to wave a white hankie. He was carrying a fairly large size mounted map marked with the battle locations and asked if it would fit inside. He kept the map in his lap.

After take off the pilot kept the G-1 well oriented with the terrain by pointing out salient features en route. The pilot was directed to land on the outskirts of Chawinda and keep the helicopter engine running. The Colonel summoned an officer nearby and asked for directions. We flew around outskirts of Chawinda town, where the new trenches were being dug. During the pilots briefing last night at the squadron, our FDL's were at Phillora the previous evening.

By now the passenger had informed the pilot that he was proceeding to personally contact elements of a tank regiment, which was in contact with the enemy. The colonel was to pass some vital information / briefing personally as the same could not be risked on the wireless.

When the pilot was directed to follow the road to Phillora, he did not hesitate. The pilot had been assigned on two missions inside enemy territory during Rann Kutch battle, last April. The pilot took necessary precautions when directed to proceed to Phillora. The pilot narrates.

“Realising that we were going into no mans land, we headed towards Phillora, keeping to the west of the road, flying at below the tree top level, to avoid detection from the ground as well as aerial interception. I had to keep a good lookout for our survival. Beyond Chawinda there were no signs of life or any movement as far as one could see, in about 5 miles visibility. There were occasional scanty crops along the way up to village Kallewali, which was totally deserted. Not even a stray dog was to be seen. I identified the village to the colonel while passing by.

The Colonel urged the pilot to proceed ahead towards Phillora. Between Kallewali and Phillora there were no crops. The flat ploughed fields for the next 1000 yards had turned into fine powdery dust. At Phillora a knoll about 30 ft high indicated tell tale signs of an OP position.

In the meanwhile the Indians had earlier intercepted our wireless message. Realising that a chopper is likely to fly close to their position to proceed to a cavalry squadron that had encircled and cut them out from the north. Ostensibly the Indians ordered their tanks at Phillora to shut down turrets and point the guns backwards.

I spotted one tank camouflaged in the scanty sugar cane field barely 100 yards west of the high ground and pointed it to the colonel. Immediately three more tanks were spotted by me and indicated to the passenger. All the tanks were littered with dust with their guns pointing towards India and camouflaged at the edge of the sugar cane fields. No soldiers were visible anywhere. The colonel directed me to land close to the nearest tank. I declined to land and kick up a whirlwind of dust, that would have given out our position. Instead I reduced speed and proceeded to land about 200 yards beyond the nearest tank. This dust free spot with scanty cotton field beyond the tank provided good cover from ground and air. The far sides of the cotton field had about 10 feet tall "Jantar" hedge that would provide cover on the ground

As the chopper passed a beam the nearest tank the pilot heard a burst of machine gun fire. Barely at 10 feet above the ground and drifting at a low speed, the helicopter suddenly started yawing to the left. Increasing engine power would worsen the torque. Countering the torque with cyclic control provided some momentum. Gaining sufficient speed was not possible.

On hearing the fire the colonel started cursing the ground troops and was anxiously waiting to step out, for which he had opened the side door slightly, while the chopper was still on the move. I was struck with disbelief and decided on SOS measures. The pilot gradually tried to abort landing as the chopper was yawing to the left despite excessive cyclic tilt to the opposite side. In 3 large oval turns the pilot managed to drag the chopper about 250 yards towards our side of the nearest tank. After the 3rd dragging turn to offset the apparent loss of torque I put the chopper down facing the tank. It was not possible to drag it any further. The colonel by now had realised that we had been hit. He was convinced that we were being engaged by own troops by mistake. On touchdown he immediately got out and ran towards the tank cursing them loudly.

I had no faith left in his judgement. After a quick shutdown procedure I bolted for the cover beyond the raised surface of the unmetalled road, at a distance of about 60 yards to the right. As I dashed across the road and ducked behind the cover of the raised road, I heard the nearest tank fire with its main gun. A quick peep at the helicopter indicated it was a miss. The second round was obviously a hit. All the other 3 tanks fired one shot each in turn. I felt sad to see the brand new helicopter which had barely logged 100 hrs, burn to ashes. The Colonel had left the marked map inside which burned along with the helicopter.

I realised our lives were in grave danger with little chance of survival. The tanks were only 250-500 yards away and we were pinned down over 4 miles ahead of our new front line. It seemed absolutely hopeless. Within minutes we heard a battery of field guns fire a salvo. The number of bangs confirmed it was Indian. Thank God the battery fired a few salvos in concentration at the helicopter only. The time at this point was 0830 hrs on my watch.

In the meanwhile our forces intercepted an Indian wireless message from Phillora “ We have shot down a commando helicopter and two commandos have taken cover with a machine gun and a sten gun and we have pinned them down. We have requested for artillery fire and air support.” With this message every one had lost hope of our survival. Both of us had only a pistol each.

At the loss of all the hope for survival in the lap of the enemy, I momentarily went into a trance. In a split second, images of all the dear relations, family and friends flashed through the mind at a fast speed. At the end I felt sorry to realise that they will all be hurt on hearing the news.

Gradually I gathered strength and started imagining there might be hope for survival. I was hoping our jets might launch a strike, for a chopper to rescue us under the air cover. In a few minutes I could hear the jets. These jets were coming from the Indian side. I tucked myself into a pit besides the road. Four jets made two passes each rocketing, the burning helicopter. Later the leader of this formation got a gallantry award for shooting us down.

Fortunately the artillery had fired in concentration at the chopper and none of the shells fell on the road or on our side. In the meanwhile the colonel who had taken cover at least 50 yards closer to the tanks, had by now crawled close to me and urged me to keep moving. I convinced him that he should now follow my advice being a gunner.

In the meanwhile enough dust and smoke provided us cover and we managed to crawl homewards, by about 100 yards. As the dust settled the tanks must have spotted our dusty crawl across the road and showered a few bursts of machine gun fire, which passed over our heads. The slightly raised road provided us adequate protection while flushed with the ground. We stopped crawling and froze at the same spot for a while, keeping our ears wide open.

In a few minutes the artillery fire was resumed. Now the target seemed to be the road. A concentrated salvo fell barely 50 yards ahead of us. We thanked god for the pause. The colonel urged me to continue crawling but I did not let him move till the next salvo landed another 50 yards ahead. It was apparent that the artillery observer wanted to comb the road up to Kallewali village. We started crawling desperately behind the moving artillery fire. The fire moved faster than we could crawl. After several minutes the fire lifted. We crawled all the way up to 100 yards short of the village.

Surprisingly none of the tanks made an attempt to leave their positions in order to capture us. With passage of time our hopes gained strength. We paused 100 yards short of the village in order to assess the situation and to have a breather.

The village was on raised ground and the last 100 yards of road was devoid of any trees or cover from observation. We were certain that the tanks barely 1000 yards away, would engage us over this patch. We therefore had to run for life over this stretch, which required all the strength. The colonel was no longer in a state to continue crawling. He urged me to carry on without him while I did not wish to leave him alone. Finally when he explained that he could not proceed any further, due to exhaustion and that I should get along and send help. It seemed to make sense now.

I expected the road passing through the village to be mined and decided to run for the nearest four feet high boundary wall of a house and jump across. I therefore gathered all my strength and bolted over the exposed stretch and somersaulted over the boundary wall, into the nearest house drawing fire from the tanks. I followed the fresh tank tracks to the middle of the village. Before leaving the village, I popped up to peer over the wall to scan the entire area to the east of the road.

I noticed a jeep trudging along cross country, from the west. The jeep mounted with a weapon was heading towards the village, at about one mile distance. Cautioning the colonel without response I got on to the road and ran along the fresh tank or vehicle tracks leading out of the village.

Beyond the village I decided to deflect about 30 degrees to the right to proceed under cover of the crops and along a depression in the ground. Once at a reasonable safe distance in the middle of the scanty corn crop I managed to have a look at the village. The jeep was now at the forward edge of the village on the raised road, apparently assessing the situation. I ran along momentarily kicking the dusty ground along the bank of the small nullah before getting low and out of sight. I am not certain if that drew enemy attention but the jeep soon after sprayed bullets wildly, in the general direction.

I proceeded along safely but at an angle to my desired direction to Chawinda. After going for 1.5 mile I diverted towards the road and then walked leisurely when Chawinda was in sight. On a hot and humid day, by now I was exhausted and fairly bruised on elbows and knees. The

flying suit was muddy with sweat and dust and torn at the elbows and knees. I was rather dehydrated with terribly dry lips and throat. It was almost mid day by now.

As Chawinda drew closer, a sudden fear started haunting and depressing me. Would the soldiers on the frontline care to identify me before opening fire at someone looking as strange as me in my unfamiliar attire? The thought of being killed at the hands of our own troops, after having escaped an unbelievable ordeal, was too depressing and pitiable.

From about 1000 yards I tried to walk with the hands over my head, not easily possible in my present state. Nevertheless I put in all efforts to look as harmless as a dove. As I came closer, I noticed troops emerging out of the crops and descending into the trenches and pointing their weapons at the stranger. I felt like a convict facing a firing squad. I proceeded slowly and cautiously.

At about 200 yards I was challenged and asked to come closer. At about 50 yards I tried to identify myself to their amusement. Soon an officer emerged on the scene and took over. As soon as I was recognised I desperately asked for the water. The company commander also appeared on the scene. He sympathised and remarked, Bajwa when I heard the news, I hoped it was not you. Little did I know." He confided that I was the only one aviator that he knew, from the infantry school course during 1963. At the battalion HQ I narrated the episode to Lt.Col. Shinwari, the CO 22 Baluch.

While the doctor put me on the stretcher for the first aid, I started narrating the details to the CO. The colonel ordered his jeep to be mounted with a machine gun and a section of selected soldiers to prepare to accompany him for recovering Lt. Col Nazir. He refused to take me along due to my physical condition. Within half an hour the party departed along the road towards Phillora.

Within half an hour we heard the exchange of small arms fire for several minutes. After about two hours the party returned. From a distance we concluded the news was not good. On return Colonel Shinwari seemed depressed. He confirmed that they had searched up to the forward edge of the village and beyond and drew enemy fire. There was no sign of Colonel Nazir, as he had not responded to their shouting for him even by name.

I mentioned to the Colonel that having gone through what we had , one would not trust any one and I was confident that he would show up during the night . The front line troops were

conveyed to be cautious and hold fire at night as the Colonel was expected to cross the FDL's during the night. At 1500 hours I departed by road, to join the number 2 composite squadron at Gujranwala.

The following morning I heard the good news that the colonel had crossed over at night and was admitted in the hospital, suffering from shell shock and exhaustion. I was allowed to meet him only on the third day. When we were face to face, I had to introduce myself, as he failed to recognise me, although I was in a similar flying suit. On recognition he embraced me passionately. With tears in his eyes, he remarked, " No one shall ever believe what we have gone through and are still alive."

The colonel then narrated that after our separation he discovered the presence of a graveyard in the vicinity of the village. He crawled and rolled over, into a sunken grave and soon passed out. He vaguely recalled having heard small arms fire on two occasions. He had no idea about the recovery attempt for his rescue. He finally woke up when it was dark and made his way to the FDL's at around midnight.

The same evening Lt. Col. Mohd Khan CO of the squadron conveyed me a message that the Corps Commander Lt. Gen. Rana has directed to recommend the pilot for an immediate award of an SJ and has asked for the written citation from the squadron. The CO in turn asked me to write my citation. It did not appear dignified for me to write my own citation, particularly when the commanders at all levels were by now in complete picture of the entire episode.

When hostilities ended and the forces were withdrawn, Major Bajwa and Col Nazir, revisited the crash site on 7.5.66. The same flight of 12.9.65 was simulated. The H-13 helicopter followed the same height speed and the flight path till touch down. The distances were paced and the entire episode recalled and the Almighty thanked once again, for giving us another life.

Some useful lessons are to be learnt from this episode. The pilot should make his own judgement and be cautious about getting influenced by the passenger, no matter how professional or closely related to the objective. Once in the air, the observation of the passenger / guide may not be as keen or precise as the pilot, who is used to the air. Pilots are advised to have a substantial breakfast and adequate intake of liquids before embarking on risky missions during the war. In this case the pilot recalled having light breakfast and only one cup of tea since 2100 hours the previous evening.

1 Army Aviation Squadron had to change its location as strip was becoming nuisance. It was hemmed in by a Medium Regiment on one side and a Heavy Battery on the other. Enemy air and counter bombardment was equally shared by all three. Only once did a L-19 got the splinters. After the intense fire of 10/11 September squadron reshuffled its deployment at the landing ground. Pasrur Airfield was also scene of intense aerial and ground activities. Own 1st Armoured Division also joined there. A good number of Army aircraft operated around and an Officer's Mess was established in the vicinity of the World War- II vintage airfield at Pasrur. Although strip was established on 16th September but airfield was under use from the beginning. On 12th September at 0630 hours when pilots after landing were in the process of covering their aircraft they were attacked by the IAF, heavy bombs were dropped apart from strafing.

13th September 1965 -Zafarwal

On 12th September 1965 Army Aviators noticed enemy movement towards Zafarwal and the information was passed to 6 Armoured Division. They reacted and Zafarwal was occupied on the night 12th /13th September 1965. On the morning of 13th September 1965 the enemy main attack came at Zafarwal. The biggest tank battle since WW-2 was unfolding. In the face of the enemy attack, own infantry positions were holding ground. Situation was turning favourably however a squadron of 32 Tank Delivery Unit (Sherman Tanks) under fog of war withdrew from its position. The pilot of L-19 operating in the area, Captain Niazi, was told on the wireless net to give the message to the squadron to immediately return to Zafarwal. The pilot flew over the tanks moving towards Dhamtal. He gestured and kept indicating to them to return to Zafarwal. There was no response. He wrote a message and dropped it but to no avail. Sensing that all efforts had failed, the pilot landed the L-19 on the road in front of the tanks. The squadron at that time was commanded by a Risaldar. Captain Niazi personally explained the position to him and ordered to return back to Zafarwal. The tanks were thus successfully sent back. They later effectively participated against the enemy at Zafarwal Sector.

Captain Zafar was carrying out the reconnaissance mission in Pasrur area when his L-19 was hit by the ground fire, he never knew about that and it was only after landing that he was shown the holes. Intensive flying was kept up despite the activities of IAF. Increasing demands of artillery shoots were met by pooling all resources of pilots and aircraft

First Air Support Request through L-19

On 13th September 1965 for the first time Army Aviation called upon air support successfully through ACT fitted in L-19, piloted by Captain Jamil. Through air action five enemy tanks were burnt. Under the intense fire of own guns, the enemy tanks would disperse and bury themselves in the mud houses for their camouflage. The same practice they would

follow, whenever our Air Force pounded them. Own Air Force was doing sorties very regularly and effectively. The ACT set carried in the L-19, was proving to be very helpful. The aerial observers were most efficiently directing our aircraft on to the enemy tanks. "Five enemy tanks were destroyed and later another three were seen burning due to air force attacks conducted by airborne control team." {War Diary 2 Army Aviation Squadron}.

On 14th September one Ultra High Frequency {UHF} radio set was provided by 1 Corps Headquarters to 1 Army Aviation Squadron and on the same very day at 0700 hours Major Rabbani along with Captain Jamil directed own aircraft towards enemy tanks with remarkable success. At 1330 hours Captain Muazzam and Captain Jamil again undertook this mission. They stayed for over four hours and twice directed own aircraft onto the enemy. Despite all the confusion of the intense battle on the ground, the close range engagements of our tanks, there was not a single case where own aircraft attacked any of our own tanks as of mistaken identity. This does reflect the professionalism of our Air Force pilots but also the fact that Army Aviators were very useful in guiding our own pilots. The knowledge of the ground, the exact location of the enemy armour and the full familiarity of own positions greatly helped them in meeting that role. Lieutenant Colonel Saleem Ullah later rang Colonel Mohammad Khan and conveyed PAF's appreciation.

14th September,

Captain Niazi and ``The Destruction of Indian 14 Mountain Division``

On 14th September 1965 Captain HUK Niazi was sent for a surveillance mission around Zafarwal. He did not return for another four hours which was causing commotion at Adamke Strip. As soon as Captain Niazi landed. He explained his prolonged absence. *"After take off I gained height and started flying towards Zafarwal, I saw no enemy activity in the area so I decided to fly North of our positions at Deg Nadi. It was 0815 hours, the sun was in the East. Looking at some distance, I noticed very flashy reflections of the rays of the sun. This was over a fairly large area. This greatly intrigued me and I kept flying in that direction. I crossed the International Boundary, West of Deg Nadi. Getting nearer to these reflections, I saw a huge concentration of enemy vehicles some 4 miles West of Samba. I had a very careful look, that was why I took so long in coming back, my estimates are 2000-3000 vehicles."* He further informed his Commanding Officer that he had passed that information to divisional headquarters on the artillery net, requesting for Air Force strike.

Lieutenant Colonel Mahmood immediately flew to Headquarters 1 Corps. He conveyed the information personally to Lieutenant General Rana, the Corps Commander. Lieutenant Colonel Mahmood} further very strongly suggested to him that he should himself request the Air Headquarters for an air strike. He did that very promptly. The Air Headquarters was very reluctant to accept the authenticity of the news. Under insistence from the Corps Commander initially only two fighter reconnaissance aircraft were sent. Arriving overhead, they confirmed that news. On the air they requested for all available aircraft to be sent for strike in that area. Soon four F-86 of 18 Squadron, led by Squadron Leader Alau Din 'Butch' arrived. They kept pounding them with all the weapons available, including the napalm bombs, used for the first time in war. Squadron Leader 'Butch' on the same noon,

destroyed ammunition train at Gurdaspur. Lion hearted 'Butch' never returned from that sortie.

The prisoners belonging to this formation captured later disclosed that Indian reinforcement {14 Infantry Division} had arrived in Samba area on 14th September. While still in their concentration area, they were spotted and very badly mauled by Pakistan Air Force. They ceased to exist as a proper fighting formation after that. From the captured enemy 1 Armoured Brigade "OO No. 3", which was signed on 13th September at 1315 hours, it was clear that the main Indian Armoured Division's attack was planned to be launched sometimes on or after 14th September 1965

16th September -Climax

Indian attack did not proceed as planned. The fierce tank battle which started on 13th September reached its climax on 16th September. From the early morning of 16th September, the L-19 aircraft were observing clearly the three main enemy columns of attack. One column was directed towards Chawinda, the centre column was making its thrust between Chawinda and Rakh Baba Bhuhre Shah and the third enemy column was directing its attack west of the Rakh towards Badiana. The Army Aviators kept informing the details of this operation to the relevant formations. The heroic and bold fight of our tank crews blunted a very determined attack of the enemy.

Army Aviators were assisting own troops by reporting enemy movements, directions of attack, reinforcements, losses and also directing own artillery fire on enemy troops, concentration areas and rear areas. For pilots it was a unique experience to watch exchange of flying shells and missiles, tanks on fire and bursting into pieces, men dying in agony and pain. The battlefield littered with twisted steel, fire, smoke and stench of burnt human flesh also reflected the grit and determination of those who would not give-up even an inch of Pakistani land and the stubbornness of attackers who wanted to achieve a break-through to the Grand Trunk Road. The effective concentration of all available guns, on the attacking enemy armour columns coupled with the accurate and effective direction of our air force, through the ACT sets fitted in the aircraft, did highlight the humble contribution that the unarmed L-19 aircraft were making.

Captain Akhtar {Lieutenant Colonel retired} has profound memories of one such sortie. "We were flying over Chawinda and directing the fire of own artillery guns as Air OP. On the front seat was Captain Niazi, I was in the rear. We looked around and saw two Indian Mystere aircraft overhead. Indian aircraft took a turn and aligned their machines to attack our unarmed, slow moving L-19. Niazi once again put the nose down but could not escape fast enough; the bullets started to go through the aircraft. The enemy fire failed to kill us but crippled the aircraft. With controls damaged, we could not fly straight, one wing of the aircraft was down so we could only go round and round in circles. We managed to reach Sialkot Strip and tried to put the aircraft down. It was one wing landing. The wing first touched the ground and the aircraft started to somersault. The aircraft broke into pieces and

we came out of the cockpit without a scratch. The aircraft was littered with bullet holes. Surely, one would only die when destined by Allah.”

18th September -

On 18th September 1965 the battle of Chawinda was in the final phase with enemy craving for a break through but own troops determined not to give an inch of the motherland. Captain Moazzam took off at 0630 hours with Captain Jamil as co-pilot to act as Forward Airborne Air Controller, target was enemy heavy guns, 6 miles inside enemy territory close to Nawan Shehr. Time over target for own fighters was 0700 hours. Visibility was poor and observation difficult. As they flew forward for better observation they came under enemy anti aircraft fire but Captain Moazzam boldly and skilfully directed own fighters amidst this panoramic fire. He flew up till 500 yards of enemy guns, 3 out of 6 were destroyed.

First Operational Night mission -Night Flight To Sargodha

Brigadier retired Hamid Chaudhry writes, “In 1965 when war broke out, I was in Army Aviation School as a Qualified Flying Instructor. On 7th September night flying was scheduled for P-7 Course. When I reached the school at night commandant Lieutenant Colonel M M Karim called me and Captain Rasheed Beg (Qualified Flying Instructor) in his office. He briefed us regarding a night mission to Sargodha and back. PAF on the instructions from General Headquarters had flown a photo reconnaissance mission over Jammu area and the photographs were to be picked up from operations room at PAF Base Sargodha and flown to General Headquarters for operational planning. The photographs were to be brought as soon as possible, therefore we were ordered to take off immediately. I filed a flight plan with the tower, the only briefing I got from Air Traffic Controller consisted of the following three sentences:-

“Sargodha Base has been informed of your mission. Sargodha Base is likely to be attacked by Indian Air Force tonight therefore keep your navigation lights off and keep radio communication to bare minimum. On arrival at Sargodha you might not get the runway lights for landing therefore land in total darkness.”

“We took off at around 2030 hours on the 7th September 1965 in L-19 No. 013 for Sargodha Base. We had just crossed Salt Range and started descending when we got a short call from Sargodha. “L-19 approaching Sargodha stay to the North, Sargodha under air raid.” The next thing we saw was an umbrella barrage being fired by own Anti Aircraft Regiments. I myself is an Anti Aircraft Gunner and had read about “Umbrella Barrage” but seeing one was really believing it. We started circling over Jhelum River and after ten minutes were cleared to approach Sargodha Airfield for landing. We headed towards the airfield and according to time flown should have been overhead the field but not a single thing was visible on ground due to complete black out. Sargodha runway had a black surface, which added to our difficulty of recognition. Sargodha controller was hesitant to talk to us and not prepared to give us runway lights for landing. In the meantime to our good luck we saw two jets taking off from the runway. We were at such a position that we could see the

flares coming out of their tail pipes. We immediately headed for the runway, informed the ATC and made a safe landing.

We were still rolling on the runway and happily discussing our safe landing that we got another short call from the air traffic controller “L-19 get off the runway, switch off and take cover.” We immediately pulled off towards the fair weather strip and went close to the tree line. Within seconds we saw the Anti Aircraft Regiment firing another Umbrella Barrage. At the same time we heard a formation of Indian Jets drop two heavy bombs at the airfield at low level. The only damage caused was to a taxi track and luckily there was no loss of life or aircraft. Witnessing an umbrella barrage is one thing but penetrating it requires a lion’s heart, the devil must be given his due, they were brave pilots. Later we learnt that they were four aircraft and one was hit.”

Once that raid was over, we started the aircraft and taxied to the parking area. We called for the required documents from PAF Operations Room and headed back for Dhamial. We reached Dhamial past the mid night where representatives from General Headquarters were eagerly waiting. That was the first operational night mission of 1965 war by an Air OP.

Turning into a Bomber Base

On some nights, Dhamial Base was utilized by the PAF to launch couple of their improvised strategic bombers to take care of the suspected enemy concentrations behind the front-lines. Of course, for the purpose, the fleet of lumbering C-130 was utilized with ingenuity and imagination. Such actions always created some excitement at the base. Lieutenant Colonel Naseer Ullah Babar was the Duty Officer at the base when the sortie of C-130 was conducted. He recalls: “It was the policy of PAF to disperse their aircraft in anticipation of Indian air attacks. My office was at the present day tea bar. At night I received a call from a Grade-1 staff officer at Lahore in which he mentioned about the reports of Indian concentration close to BRB Canal. Wing Commander Eric of PAF was also listening and he inquired about the situation on which I mentioned the conversation. The original task of C-130 was somewhere but Wing Commander Eric insisted on taking up that task in addition to the already designated targets and after lot of coordination the mission was finally approved. The bombing was accurate and deadly and later Wing Commander Eric was awarded with Sitara-I-Jurat.

L-23 Missions

During the daylight hours, some missions were undertaken by the solitary L-23, piloted by Major Shams Kureishy and Major Mushtaq Madni, to take General Musa to Lahore, Hafizabad and Pasrur during the war.

Beavers arrived at Dhamial Base

Four Beaver{L-20} aircraft were requisitioned from Plant Protection Department. These six-seater, single-engine aircraft arrived at Dhamial Base on 27th July 1965. On 6th September evening there were two of these aircraft at the Base. On 8th another Beaver was flown in by Mr. Zaka Ullah Khan and remained so till 24th March 1966. Selected officers, including Majors Ayub, Fazal ur Rehman, Mansoor Sial, Aftab, Masoom, Saqlain and Captain Abdul Rasheed Baig underwent conversion from 14th June-26th June and from 2nd July to 17th July 1965. These officers had been familiar with the Beaver aircraft by virtue of undergoing instrument flying on it either at Stuttgart {Germany} or at Fort Rucker {America}. Instructor was Mr. Zaka Ullah Khan, the Chief pilot of Plant Protection at Karachi; all Beavers were in Yellow Colour.

The first operational sortie was undertaken by Major Ayub and Major Fazal ur Rehman on 7th September 1965. It flew to Quetta and brought Major General Shahibzada Yaqub Ali Khan and Colonel Sawar Khan {later Vice Chief of Army Staff}. Both the officers were urgently required at General Headquarters; as Command and Staff College had been closed. On 20th September 1965, two Indian pilots {POWs} were flown from Rahwali to Rawalpindi. Mr. Zakaullah Khan also flew operational sorties. He writes: "For days I would fly from Dhamial to Karachi/Hyderabad, landing down on the way at various places {HQs}, delivering critical ammunition, medicines, mail and surveillance. I flew first Indian POW from Chhor to Rawalpindi, he was Colonel K.K.V. Nimba. Army Commander, General Musa was also flown by me on 18th September 1965 from Rawalpindi to Suleimanke." Colonel Awan, Lieutenant Colonel Zafar Khan the base second-in-command along with Lieutenant Colonels Mahmood and Saeed Qadir, planned to turn Beaver into a light bomber aircraft. Trials were conducted at Bara Khau at the end of war. That was to be done by a little modification, installing a commode like structure with an aperture for dropping an appropriate size bomb manually on selected target. Beavers flew 377 operational hours.

Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Khan, after consultation with the technical staff, improvised a pod for mounting an Medium Machine Gun {MMG} on the OH-13 helicopter skids but was bit too late as the war was about to terminate.

Enemy Para troopers

On 7th September Lieutenant Colonel Saleem Ullah was in the General Headquarters to attend the daily briefing. Army Chief General Musa was also present. Colonel Saleem narrates: "I was standing in one corner when telephone rang, since General Musa was close by he picked up the telephone and talked. Later he told us that Indian paratroopers had landed in Sargodha area and inquired about own troops in the vicinity, there were none, so he ordered the Station Commander Jhelum to stand on the road and divert Commando Company who were to pass through and then he looked at me and ordered to have aircraft sweep the area." The base was put on red alert that night, to search the area around the airfield especially the likely places considered as the suitable sites for rallying of enemy's paratroopers.

A fighting patrol was pushed out under the command of Captain Irshad Gul { brigadier retired}. He combed the suspected corners successfully but on return the patrol was fired upon by a jittery defender who had not become really proficient in the art of challenging and differentiation between friend and foe. Luckily the trigger-happy soldier was not a marksman and no one was hurt.

Subsequently Captain Shaffat and Captain Sheraz went in the L-19 to Chiniot area for the search of enemy paratroopers; they did not find any thing. Again on 9th September Major Sultan and Captain Sagheer flew in OH-13(S) No. 143 and 139 to search enemy paratroopers but returned without vain.

2 Army Aviation Squadron's War Diary also records that "At 2230 hours on 8th September, an alarm was raised in the camp that some enemy paratroopers had been dropped near by. Captain Jamil, Muazam and Salim took few soldiers to find them out. The search was of no avail."

At Sialkot 1 Army Aviation Squadron was also not immune from rumours, on the evening of 10th September, few civilians informed Headquarters 15 Division of seeing enemy tanks all around them, Squadron was put on general alert, second-in-command Major Nazir alerted the Squadron for possible move to Gujrat Strip, less one aircraft. Later, Major Nazir and Captain Askree flew around to find the truth, it was a false alarm. On 13th September Driver Dost Mohammad of 1 Squadron was shot fatally by the own guard commander, it was dark and with rumours of enemy paratroopers still in the air, guard commander challenged him and on not receiving the proper pass word, fired. Dost Mohammad was buried with full military honours. He was the only war casualty of Army Aviation.

Last Day of the War

At 0300 hours on 23rd September 1965, ceasefire was declared between Pakistan and India. It was a hectic day for all the three squadrons. Captain Jamil and Muazzam flew and landed at Khem Karan where 2 Squadron Flight was placed on a dusty strip, Captain Nagy took General Attique to Pasrur and back to Gujranwala, Captain Askaree evacuated Captain Nisar of Special Services Group from Narowal to Sialkot, he was wounded by a bullet. Colonel Babar and Major Tirmzi of 3 Squadron flew liaison sortie in 7 Division area. Pilots of 3 Squadron were still busy in evacuating casualties from Palangi.

Major Nazir, Captain Khalid Saeed and Captain Baig of 1 Squadron had narrow escape, while coming from Suchet Garh, they were short of fuel, and home-base was covered in a layer of cloud. There was quite a gale blowing at Sialkot Strip when they landed. Perhaps an appropriate anti climax to the war.

War Ends but Aviation Support Continues

The war ended on 23rd September 1965 but the demand for aviation effort increased further for reconnaissance and liaison missions. That, however, was a piece of cake as

compared to the flying in the heat of war, with all kinds of dangers looming around. All squadrons remained deployed till May 1966 performing assigned missions. In October 1965, Captain Khalid Saeed Janjua crashed in L-19 No. 016 at Adamke Strip while carrying out operational reconnaissance at 1640 hours and was severely injured.

First Use Of Two MI-4 Helicopters

The quantum of troops in Kashmir during and after the 1965 War, was almost doubled, particularly the Infantry Battalions and Artillery Regiments. Previously only a thin line of infantry troops with scarce artillery support was deployed on the cease fire line before the commencement of the conflict. The rapidly advancing autumn/winter season made logistic support a nightmare for the commanders at all levels. Rations, ammunition for the troops and fodder for pack animals was essential. The transportation of ration, ammunition and fodder through porter-parties between the road heads and forward locations would only be a trickle. The logistic situation, particularly in Nelum, Jhelum Valleys, Bagh and Rawalakot Sectors was really desperate.

The story as narrated by brigadier retired Syed Mustanir Tirmizi, then a major, deserves to be told in his own words "While returning from a mission in Azad Kashmir in OH-13 helicopter, one late September evening, I spotted two Junkish looking large helicopters parked on the strip at Dhamial Airfield. After switching off my helicopter, I walked over to these machines out of sheer curiosity. I had not seen such helicopters during my Basic Helicopter Training in USA. In any case, our ally USA, had already put a ban on arms supply to Pakistan. I circled around the nearest helicopter. As compared to OH-13 it was a giant, a bit ugly looking and much rugged as compared to the American helicopters. On enquiring I was told that those were the Russian MI-4 helicopters belonging to Oil Gas Distribution Company (OGDC) and had been requisitioned by the Army. It did not arouse any enthusiasm or excitement in me as a pilot. I was wondering whether those ugly birds could ever take off and fly. Next morning the indomitable Lieutenant Colonel NUK Babar, introduced us to Mr. Bashar and retired Flight Lieutenant Bokhari, the two Oil Gas Distribution Company pilots along with their co-pilots. A draconian order was issued to us i.e. Majors A L Awan, S L A Bokhari, Muhammad Naeem and myself, to fly and get acquainted with the two MI-4 helicopters, by local flying in Dhamial circuit for two days and then the next two days to be spent for the area familiarization of Oil Gas Distribution Company pilots in 1, 5 and 6 Sectors and as usual flight safety be damned. Army Aviation would not let down the men and animals located on the Line of Control. The actual logistic operations would start after four days. Such an order would have raised many eye brows under normal conditions but all of us were cognizant of the desperate logistic situation in AK where we were operating for the last couple of months.

Landing at Leepa Valley helipad was particularly a trying experience since it entailed spiraling down in tight cup shaped valley from ten thousand to seven thousand feet with trigger happy Indian infantry occupying the heights. The first trial landing was carried out very gingerly with thumping hearts. We, the squadron pilots, were in no position to control

the helicopter, not being fully operational while sitting in the co-pilot seat. Our functions were confined to navigation and sweating only. All credit to Captains Bashar and Bokhari of Oil Gas Distribution Company, who completed this difficult transition with aplomb.”

“Needless to say, the mere appearance of two big helicopters was immensely morale boosting for the beleaguered troops. They were assured of their logistical sustenance during the next six winter months when road / porter operation would come to a halt due to snow. These two MI-4 helicopters provided the necessary logistic support admirably in four out of six AK Sectors. Bhimber and Kotli Sectors were relatively more accessible by existing road network. In addition, parachutes used to air drop supplies by the transport planes of the PAF and collected by the recipients, were also brought back for reuse from inaccessible areas.”

“Throughout the winter of 1965-66 we were busy like bees in logistic flight operations. Kel was to be supplied from Muzaffarabad, Leepa from Garhi Dopatta and Bagh, Rawalakot Sectors from Moong Bajri. As per the schedule worked out with Headquarters 12 Division, we would operate from Muzaffarabad, Garhi Dopatta and Moong Bajri, for ten to twelve days in rotation. By that time we had become fully operational on MI-4 helicopter. Hence after a farewell dinner in the Army Aviation Officer's Mess, we relieved Basher and Bukhari and started independent operations with a skeleton Oil Gas Distribution Company maintenance crew.” Full credit goes to Lieutenant Colonel Babar who in his own style caught the bull by the horn and his officers who zealously and devotedly tamed it and undertook many missions without any hesitation. Dumping operation was carried out from 30th October 1965 to February 1966 and following tonnage of ration and ammunition was lifted:-

Leepa	99 tons in 15 days
Kharsan Dhara	32 tons in 10 days
Dhok Panjal	25 tons in 15 days
Sheru ka Dhera	24 tons in 30 days
Kel	6 tons in 10 days
Kahuta Hajipir	8 tons in 4 days
Hajipir	2 tons in 2 days
Serai Hyderabad	6 tons in 6 days
Total	202 tons

Sadhewala Post- December 1965

When 1965 War ended, Pakistan was holding a sizeable chunk of Indian Territory, In the southern desert Pakistan Army along with Rangers had Kishengarh Fort, Tanot, Longanewala, Ghutara and area right down to Shahgarh. In the line of posts from Islamgarh to Ghultara being held by own Rangers, there was one post Sadhewala being held

by Indians. Movement of troops from Longanewala to Tanot and Kishengarh thus required long detours. That Indian post was getting reinforcement from Ramgarh.

L-19 Arrives in Sadhewala

On 20th October 1965 Captain Hamid Chaudhry and Captain Muazzam were ordered to fly from Gujranwala to Rahim Yar Khan and operate with the Rangers. They arrived there via Multan on the same day and reported to Headquarters Rangers. Rangers Force was commanded by Brigadier Khuda Dad {KD}. In the desert the ground movement was difficult and time consuming, therefore aerial recce proved to be very useful both in planning and execution phase of this operation. From 27th November 1965 onwards, Aviation effort was mainly diverted towards reconnaissance of Sadhewala. Officers of the Rangers and Infantry Battalion which were to take part in the attack were flown. They include Major Tariq Rasul {Father of Brigadier Arif Rasul}, Brigadier Khuda Dad, Lieutenant Colonel Majid, Lieutenant Colonel Talib and Lieutenant Colonel Toni Mahmood. Desert features present difficult perspective early morning and changes with passage of day and position of sun. Pilots flew early morning and then late in the afternoon, they also helped Rangers in making a sand model of the Sadhewala Post at their Headquarters. D-Day was fixed on 2nd December 1965.

1st December 1965

Three reconnaissance sorties were flown in the area. Withdrawal route from Sadhewala led to Ramgarh via Morgich Ka dera and Miraowala Tibba. The routes of the enemy as pointed by the Air OP were blocked by having blocking positions on the same night

D-Day 2nd December 1965

Captain Hamid Chaudhry writes: "A dawn attack was planned, I took off before first light. The flying time from Rahim Yar Khan to Sadhewala via Sandh was about 40 minutes. I was on target 20 minutes before the first light. As planned earlier, I started with an Artillery Shoot as part of pre H-hour bombardment.

Sadhewala Post was located in a large bowl of sand with high brims. Enemy was sitting on the high ground. By this time extensive flying had made me familiar with the area. Enemy was pinned down by own accurate artillery fire and own troops reached assaulting position. The moment own artillery fire was lifted the Indians were able to open heavy machine gun fire on our assaulting troops. I, from the air, guided the battalion of Lieutenant Colonel Toni to move behind the Sadhewala and reach the track, thus cutting off the withdrawal route. I had Lieutenant Colonel Majid with me in the L-19. Indians after some time, started withdrawing, I could see them running back on camels, foot and in the lone jeep. But they were nipped by the battalion of Colonel Toni Mahmood. By 1000 hours the post had been captured.

Later I landed in the bowl of Sadhewala. The whole post was littered with dead bodies. Indian Post commander, Lieutenant Paraveen Kumar was captured he had a thick eye glasses. When one of our soldier tried to blind fold him, Paraveen Kumar said, " Just take the glasses off, without them, I am blind." I saw a dead body of a Second Lieutenant with his steel helmet lying on his side, inside the helmet was the photograph of a beautiful smiling girl."

Epilogue

. The War of 1965 with India was the first challenge faced by the Pakistan Army, so was the case with air arm of the army. L-19 were already here for last over six years and pilots were pretty confident about their operational use. OH-13 helicopters, however, were a recent acquisition and their appearance on the battlefield was to a large extent a surprise for even own soldiers. The pilots were not very experienced but the whole force entered the war with excellent frame of mind.

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TASHKENT DECLARATION

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan, having met at Tashkent and having discussed the existing relations between India and Pakistan, hereby declare their firm resolve to restore normal and peaceful relations between their countries and to promote understanding and friendly relations between their peoples. They consider the attainment of these objectives of vital importance for the welfare of the 600 million people of India and Pakistan.

I

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan agree that both sides will exert all efforts to create good neighborly relations between India and Pakistan in accordance with the United Nations Charter. They reaffirm their obligation under the Charter not to have recourse to force and to settle their disputes through peaceful means. They considered that the interests of peace in their region and particularly in the Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent and, indeed, the interests of the people so India and Pakistan were not served by the continuance of tension between the two countries. It was against this background that Jammu and Kashmir was discussed, and each of the sides set forth its respective position.

II

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that all armed personnel of the two countries shall be withdrawn not later than 24 February, 1966, to the positions they held prior to 5 August, 1965, and both sides all observe the cease-fire terms on the cease-fire line.

III

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that relations

between India and Pakistan shall be based on the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of each other.

IV

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that both sides will discourage any propaganda directed against the other country, and will encourage propaganda which promotes the development of friendly relations between the two countries.

V

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that the High Commissioner of India to Pakistan and the High Commissioner of Pakistan to India will return to their posts and that the normal functioning of diplomatic missions of both countries will be restored. Both Government shall observe the Vienna Convention of 1961 on Diplomatic Intercourse.

VI

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed to consider measures towards the restoration of economic and trade relations, communications, as well as cultural exchanges between India and Pakistan, and to take measures to implement the existing agreements between India and Pakistan.

VII

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that they will give instructions to their respective authorities to carry out the repatriation of the prisoners of war.

VIII

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that the two sides will continue the discussion of questions relating to the problems of refugees and eviction/illegal immigrations. They also agreed that both sides will create conditions which will prevent the exodus of people. They further agreed to discuss the return of the property and assets taken over by either side in connection with the conflict.

IX

The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan have agreed that the two sides will continue meetings both at the highest and at other levels on matters of direct concern to both countries. Both sides have recognized the need to set up joint Indian-Pakistani bodies which will report to their Governments in order to decide what further steps should be taken. The Prime Minister of India and the President of Pakistan recorded their feelings of deep appreciation and gratitude to the leaders of the Soviet Union, the Soviet Government and personally to the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. for their constructive, friendly and noble part in bringing about the present meeting which has resulted in mutually satisfactory results. They also express to the Government and friendly people of Uzbekistan their sincere thankfulness for their overwhelming reception and

generous hospitality. They invite the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the U.S.S.R. to witness this declaration.

10 January 1966

PAKISTAN INDIA WAR 1971

In 1969 under intense political pressure Field Marshall Ayub Khan handed over the reins of the country to General Yahya Khan. The very first general elections of the country were held in 1970 in which Sheikh Mujeeb swept the arena in East Pakistan and Zulfiqar Bhutto managed majority in West Pakistan. It was almost unthinkable for the Indus Valley Aryans to be under the rule of the Brahmaputra Valley

East Pakistan Was Slipping Away

By last week of March 1971, President General Yahya Khan's effort failed to broker a political solution between divergent political parties emerged after the general elections of December 1970. Having reached a political impasse and to control the worsening law and order situation in East Pakistan, President General Yahya Khan ordered army action on 25th March 1971 named "Operation Search Light."

Revolt of East Bengal Regiments {EBR}

Majority of civil population was hostile. Awami League workers were organized into Mukti Bahini and over 19,000 rifles had been issued to them by the Indians. East Bengal Regiments were the first to revolt and started ambushing army units. Major Zia Ur Rehman, the second in command of 8 EBR at Chittagong revolted on 26th March 1971 with entire battalion after killing his Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Rashid Janjua along with other West Pakistani personnel posted in the unit and proclaimed himself as the Commander-in-Chief of Bangladesh Army. Reportedly, Zia made Lieutenant Colonel Janjua sit on the commanding officers' chair and made his batman fire the fatal shot. His speech was broadcast from All India Radio the same evening. He later became the President of Bangladesh and was eventually assassinated.

Chittagong 25–31 March 1971

On 25 March soon after General Yahya's speech, rebels took control of Chittagong Airport. On the same night (25/26 March) 53 Brigade Headquarters and 24 Frontier Force, under Brigadier Shafi were ordered to move from Comilla to Chittagong. On the morning of

26th March, there was no contact with them. Same day, two MI-8 helicopters flew from Dacca to Comilla and landed on a ground adjacent to 53 Brigade Headquarters.

Forty Special Service Group (SSG) troops were heli-lifted from Comilla to Chittagong to ensure a speedy and successful capture of the civil airport. This was vital for the quick build-up of troops by the PAF C-130s and PIA Fokker aircraft. En-route, helicopters flew along the main road Comilla-Chittagong, looking for the missing brigade, but there was no sign of it. The whole town except cantonment, naval headquarters and part of airport was under control of the miscreants and fighting was going on in the city. Major Bokhari recalls, *"I was flying the leading MI-8 at 100 feet above ground level, prior to our landing at Nautonpara Cantonment, Chittagong. I made a circling approach in order to land into the wind. As I was parallel to adjoining hills, small arms fire came onto us, but we safely landed between two barracks."* On their way back to Dacca both the helicopters evacuated about eight casualties, some families, and other West Pakistani officers who had been evacuated from EBR Center. The first helicopter was piloted by Major Liaquat and Major Patrick Tierney the second helicopter was flown by Major Ali Jawahar Khan and Major Riaz Ul Haq. The helicopters again flew along the road detected 53 Brigade near Fenni, and landed. Brigade Commander informed General Mitha, that they had to resort to minor roads as bridges were blown on the main road. He also informed that commanding officer of 24 FF, Lieutenant Colonel Shahpur had been shot dead by snipers. He also apprised General Mitha about the resistance from East Bengal Regiments. Helicopters landed in darkness at Dacca. Meanwhile 2 Commando Battalion which had just arrived from West Pakistan on 26th March was ordered to link up with 53 Brigade, still held up on the road. At 1100 hours on 27th March, 2 Commando Battalion were ambushed one mile outside Comilla, 23 commandoes died including commanding officer and 19 were seriously wounded.

Major Bokhari further narrates, *"On 28th March 1971, myself and Major Riaz went to Chittagong with some ammunition for 20 Baloch Regiment. As we were descending and trying to locate own troops, we were fired at from the hills down below. One bullet hit the tail and other bullet went through the floor in front of Major Riaz."*

The flight flew 51 missions to relieve 20 Baloch Regiment, which was cut off by the rebels and were surrounded by the enemy. Tanks/small arms ammunition, reinforcement and rations were flown in to enable 20 Baloch which was isolated in north east of the town and other friendly forces in port area and Naval Base. Each time helicopter flew over the town between the cantonment and Naval Base, the miscreants opened up with all their weapons. The helicopters carried out their missions without any mishap. 20 Baloch had linked up with relief forces and on 30th March 1971 last aviation mission was flown by Major Jawahar and Major Riaz. By then the civil airport had been cleared from the miscreants. PAF C-130s and PIA Fokkers had started bringing the reinforcements and supplies from Dacca. Thereafter the helicopters were pulled out of Chittagong Sector and diverted to Rajshahi Sector.

Rajshahi Relief Mission -1 – 6th April 1971

Rajshahi, with a population of 57000, was situated on the western border of East Pakistan on River Ganges. It was a divisional headquarter and noted for its famous Verandas Research Museum, historic town of Paharpur with interesting ruins of temples and Buddhist Viharas. It was also the home of the Bengal Police Training School with a large number of trainees.

Towards the end of March 1971, when the army went into action against the rebels, the Mukti Bahini along with the police encircled the small garrison at Rajshahi. The rescue missions entailed rushing in the armaments and evacuating the families. Major Bajwa along with Major Zahoor Ahmed operated daily missions to Rajshahi between 1- 6 April. After the first two days the rebels encirclement closed on to an extent that the local commander requested pilots not to risk the MI-8 any more as the enemy had closed on to within 800 meters of the landing spot in the centre of the own position. However, the daily missions continued with the regular F-86 fighters cover. The fighters overhead would help keep the enemy heads down, while the MI-8 would drop and pick up the back load. On return from every sortie from Rajshahi the pilots would be required to rush to the headquarters to brief General Tikka Khan and the senior staff regarding the latest position on the garrison. After the last sortie on 6th April, the helicopter flights had to be discontinued, on insistence of the commander at Rajshahi, in view of the increased risk in spite of the regular fighter cover provided to the helicopter.

Aviation Reinforcements Arrive-14th April 1971

Aviation reinforcements were mobilised for East Pakistan. Four additional MI-8 helicopters, serial numbers 324, 924, 933 and 1133, along with six Alouette helicopters numbers 054, 425, 454, 821, 823 and 825 reached Dacca on 14th April 1971. The pilots were Majors Askari, Aftab Ahmed, Nauman Mahmood, Yasin, Daud, and Ali Kuli. Lieutenant General [Retired]Ali Kuli narrates, "I went to Dacca in the first week of April 1971 by PIA via Colombo. From airport, we first went to our offices which were located across the Dacca Airport. Before our departure, the general image which we had was something like that the moment we are going to get out of the aircraft we will be attacked by the Bengalis. We were issued with revolvers, which we concealed in our clothes and carried them on board. No such thing happened and Dacca was very peaceful." Naib Subedar Malang Shah arrived with 40 other ranks, they included three technicians for L-19 aircraft as well. There was a thinking to utilize light aircraft for artillery observation and communication. L-19 however never arrived in East Pakistan. For reinforcements the PIA flights were rushing in the troops from West Pakistan. The MI-8s were used to pick up the troops from the airport and rush them to their respective stations at the borders. Mostly reinforcements were ferried to Rajshahi, Rangpur, Manikganj and Munshiganj on the western border.

Faridpur & Daal Roti Runss

During the advance to Faridpur, the MI-8's were used to support the troops on the constant march towards the western border. The marshy conditions did not permit operation

of the cook houses while on the move. Alternately “Dal Chappaties” were cooked well in the rear and on 31st May 1971 Major Bajwa along with Major Zahoor ferried and distributed a few tons of Dal Rotis, all day long.

Challenging Flying Conditions

After the army went into action, the threat of ground fire made low flying very risky. With the on set of monsoon, flying became even more difficult and challenging. The worst period for flying was from June to September. With almost constant overcast sky the cloud base would invariably be as low as 500 feet, even when it was not raining. The low level flights were subject to ground fire and flying above the clouds would make navigation to field locations very difficult. Often the miscreants, warranting reinforcements and casualty evacuation, would ambush a solitary patrolling boat in a river or a stream. The on set of monsoon compounded the problem of rescue from field locations. The pilot would fly low in the clouds and navigate to the location and descend just briefly below the clouds and quickly locate the destination or else assess the amount of navigation error and proceed to the required spot. Once overhead the chopper would spiral down keeping the windows and the door open for countering any fire from the ground. The touch down had to be very brief.

Bhairab Bazar Operation – 15th April 1971 (First Heliborne Operation of Pakistan Army Aviation)

By mid April 1971, Major General Rahim took over the command of 14 Division from Major General Khadim Raja. He had the responsibility of Mymen Singh-Dacca-Jessore area. Bhairab Bazaar Bridge was a vital railway bridge on River Meghna which linked Chittagong Port with Dacca and controlled the main line of communication of entire East Pakistan. This bridge fell in to the hands of rebels supported by Indian regular troops on the breakout of the hostilities in East Pakistan. It was prepared for demolition in case Pakistan Army tried to capture it. 14 Division was given the mission to capture this bridge intact. There were approximately 1000 renegade troops of EBR it was also reported that the area around the bridge had been mined and high bamboo stalks were also planted to avoid landing of helicopters in the area. 14 Infantry Division had 34 Brigade, Army Aviation Logistics Flight Eastern Command and one company of SSG for this mission. The far bank was under the control of 4 East Bengal Regiment, parental regiment of Captain Ikram Sehgal

Captain Ikram Sehgal

Captain Sehgal had reported at Dacca on 25th March 1971 and was still on journey period when he went to meet his parent unit in which his father had also served. In July 2004 he regrets that under those environments it was an uncalled act. The Bengalis suspecting him of a spy handed him over to the Indians. He escaped and later took refuge in American Consulate at Calcutta. Americans were helpful but quickly got rid of him. He then after a long sojourn reported at Pakistan Embassy at Delhi. He was given a false passport on which he crossed over to Nepal, from where he arrived at Burma and then via Bangkok reported

back to Dacca where he was already declared a deserter. He underwent the inquiry which cleared him of spying charges and was awarded severe reprimand for overstay. He was reverted back to Dhamial and later fought the 1971 War with an infantry battalion at Chhor Sector where he was promoted to the rank of major during war. In 1974 when POWs started repatriating than again this episode was reopened and one evening a message came from GHQ that Captain Ikram Sehgal is being retired for the 'Fault of the Officer'.

34 Brigade Moves towards the Bridge

34 Brigade columns had started from Narshingdi towards Bhairab Bazaar along railway line. The rate of advance was slow due to rebel resistance and hard going. The rebels also blew up a number of bridges. 34 Brigade was ordered to stop approximately 6-8 miles short of Bhairab Bazaar till Shaheen and Mahmood Forces {SSG Commandoes} were launched from the far bank and then the link up of both forces was to be achieved.

14 Division Plan to Secure Bridge

Plan conceived by Major General Rahim General Officer Commanding 14 Division was to para drop Jangju Company and secure the bridge. It had to be executed swiftly without giving any reaction time to enemy for detonating the bridge. However, memoirs of late Brigadier Z.A. Khan reveal that para drop zone was too narrow and paratroopers dropped via aircraft would take 30 minutes to gather, thus surprise would be lost, only solution was to drop them with the helicopters. Since the operation had to be conducted in darkness, therefore selection of landing site was paramount. On D-2 during the reconnaissance from Alouette, three likely landing areas were selected which met technical and tactical requirements. The tactical requirement given by the commandoes was that it should be as near the bridge as possible so that less time is taken by them to reach the bridge and to remove the charges. While flying overhead to assess the flying aspect, number of weapons opened up and two heavy machine guns were located in area Ashuganj Railway Station and the bridge. There were high-tension wires next to the bridge, this called for extreme pilot ability.

Weather Plays an Important Part

Weather played an important role in this operation because during this period it remained marginal. Although own helicopters could operate in limited weather conditions but PAF fighters needed minimum of 3000 feet Above Ground Level{AGL} clearance from clouds for effective strafing and rocketing. The D-Day was 14th April 1971 for this operation, but weather on 14th April remained below minima's thus General Officer Commanding 14 Division decided to postpone the operation to next day, i.e. 15th April 1971. H-Hour (the time helicopters were to land on objective) for the operation was fixed at 0630 hours.

Aviation Effort for the Operation

In this operation only three MI-8 and two Alouette helicopters were available and there were no reserve helicopters available. Additional MI-8s had not yet docked, they were en-route. However, 4 Squadron Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Awan had reached Dacca and was the leader of this formation. In order to achieve surprise no ground fire support was planned for this mission. It was planned that PAF would commence fire support ten minutes prior to landing and provide Combat Air Patrol for approximately four hours over the target. MI-8 helicopter crew consisted of Lieutenant Colonel Awan and Major Riaz, Major Bokhari and Major Ali Kuli Khan, Major Bajwa and Major Zafar.

Conduct of Bhairab Bazaar Operation

Two MI-8 helicopters (20 SSG troops in each helicopter) and two Alouette helicopters (5 SSG troops in each helicopter) took off from Dacca at 0600 hours on 15th April. The weather was clear with scattered clouds over 6000 feet. Flying time was 25 minutes. Two F-86s ex 14 Squadron commanded by Wing Commander Afzal Choudhry, took off from Dacca at 0615 hours and reached objective area at 0620 hours. They commenced strafing-rocketing of Grajo-Silo Rest House area and interdiction of Bhairab Bazaar and Kishore Ganj areas, ten minutes prior to the H-Hour. At approximately 0625 hours helicopters were flying abeam the objective area and saw own air force in action. MI-8s flew low level over the river and at 0633 hours the first MI-8 piloted by Major Bokhari with Major Ali Kuli Khan, landed east of objective. Major Ali Kuli narrates, "The helipad selected was a paddy field with about two feet of water. Area all around was about the same type. The rebels had started firing from village, factory and riverbank areas. We wanted the troops to land as close to the bridge as possible so that they could rush towards the objective in minimum time thereby not allowing rebels to lit the fuse and destroy the bridge. We landed not as close as we would have preferred but it achieved its purpose." Troops disembarked quickly and rushed towards the bridge, under the command of Major Tariq Mahmood Khan. The second MI-8 piloted by Lieutenant Colonel Latif Awan and Major Riaz ul Haque, along with Subedar Malang Shah as flight engineer landed north of objective and disembarked troops under command Lieutenant Colonel Shakur Jan. After the second MI-8 took off, first Alouette piloted by Major Tauheed Ul Haq landed with five commandoes just next to the bridge under heavy enemy fire and lastly second Alouette piloted by Captain Zareef Bangash landed with five more commandoes. During planning it was ensured that only one helicopter would land at a time, secondly it was planned that each helicopter should not land at the same spot to avoid mortar and machine gun fire. The commandoes assaulted the bridge with such speed and surprise that the enemy did not get any time to react. The bridge was captured intact. One thousand Indian and EBR soldiers were routed by seventy Pakistani SSG troops, who were dropped at the target by these bold aviators.

Second wave's return route though normally would have been different than the inbound route; in this case tactical situation dictated that flight path must be over the known cleared areas for safety reasons. After the first wave was disembarked at the objective, all helicopters returned to Narshingdi which was organized as advance base for this operation. After landing the rotors were kept running to board troops. After third mission, helicopters

were switched off for refuelling and servicing. During the refuelling, it was discovered that a bullet hit one MI-8 main rotor and main spar was damaged. The helicopter was grounded at the advance base and operation continued with the remaining choppers. After the fourth mission message was received that own casualties were required to be evacuated, including Major TM who was shot in the leg, from objective area to the helipad. The Alouettes were given this mission and six casualties including one dead body were evacuated. The operation continued till 1800 hours on 15th April 1971. The damaged MI-8 was checked and tested at Narsingdi and it was decided that it was safe for one time flight to Dacca. So MI-8, while returning to Dacca brought all casualties collected at Narsingdi.

Army Helicopters flew fifty one missions to support this operation. Approximately over hundred Indian soldiers were killed, one major, one captain and one hundred other ranks were taken prisoners and large dumps of arms, rations, four recoilless rifles and three machine guns were seized. Casualties on our side were only one killed and five wounded. Bhairab Bazaar Bridge was captured intact as planned.

Barisal – Patuakhali Operation -24 April 1971

The deserters and miscreants after having been ousted from the important areas of Dacca, Jessore, Comilla and Chandpur found a sanctuary in far fledged area of District Barisal-Patuakhali. Barisal in 1969 had population of 69,936. It was a key town on the river–sea route to the port of Chittagong. Most of the jute and rice from the east of Brahmaputra River was shipped to sea going vessels for Chittagong. It was also a great market for betel nuts and exported large quantities of fish. It was connected by river and sea to Khulna. There were no loyal troops in this area. The area was in the shape of small islands inaccessible from ground.

On 23rd April 1971, Commanding Officer 4 Army Aviation Squadron was called to Headquarters Eastern Command and was briefed about the plan to deal with Mukti Bahini in this area. Lieutenant Colonel Awan had flown in the area and he recommended landing of force simultaneously on two major islands, he further promised to locate the positions of rebels through aerial reconnaissance. Major Tauheed and Captain Nauman along with Lieutenant Colonel Awan and representatives of ground forces on board carried out the reconnaissance on the same day. Alouette flew low over the sea and zoomed up close to the islands. They found the proposed islands deserted, however, after 10 minutes of flying they located the exact locations of the rebels.

Heliborne Force

Troops earmarked for the Barisal Operation were:-

6 Punjab Regiment, one company of SSG, two gun boats ; four MI-8 and two Alouettes helicopters.

On 23 April 1971, three companies of 6 Punjab Regiment were to move by river towards troubled area in boats, with gun boats 'Rajshahi' and 'Comilla', providing them protection from Chandpur onwards. They were to land in Barisal island complex on the morning of 24 April 1971.

On the morning of 24 April 1971 one company of 6 Punjab and one company of SSG were to be lifted by MI-8s from Dacca to reinforce the river borne force. The force was to be lifted in two phases; one Alouette was detailed for search and rescue.

Conduct of the Operation

On 24th April 1971 four MI-8s carrying commandoes took off under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Awan at 0600 hours from Dacca Airfield for their objective, Alouette followed them. They flew overhead Narayangang, Chandpur and then over the delta. Visibility was exceptionally poor that day; formation was in loose vick, maintaining 50 feet height above water. Short of the target area they were informed on radio that the captain of 'Rajshahi Boat' along with six soldiers were ambushed and got injured. The captain of the leading MI-8 helicopter located own gun boats and shortly Alouette followed. MI-8 helicopters were directed by the Alouette about the location of the enemy, there was change in their locations as a result of previous day flying, and they seemed to be well educated about aviation affairs. Lieutenant Colonel Awan directed two helicopters to land in the close vicinity of rear elements of rebels while other choppers landed in front. The enemy was well entrenched but due to surprise and timely reinforcement delivered by Army Aviation, the enemy was paralysed. Rebels were completely routed and suffered heavy casualties.

Second wave landed on the escape routes of rebels, seeing the helicopters most of them surrendered on the spot. Alouette kept on flying in the area and directed ground troops about the where-abouts of hiding miscreants. The Barisal area was cleared of all Mukti Bahini miscreants within two days thereafter peace prevailed in the area with Pakistani flags flying on all the buildings of the town.

Patuakhali

Patuakhali was part of Barisal District; however it was in the process of being declared an independent district. It was reported that the enemy in Barisal area after having been defeated would try to make for Patuakhali, Bagherhat area. The Barisal force was ordered to pursue them. 4 Army Aviation Squadron with four MI-8 helicopters was to transport one SSG Company and some troops of 6 Punjab in Patuakhali area. This force was to act as an anvil for the force approaching from Barisal area. The PAF Squadron at Dacca was to provide fighters cover to the MI-8 helicopters at the time of their landing. It was reported that enemy had been reinforced with heavy machine guns to counter heliborne force.

Conduct Of Operation

On 26 April 1971 at 0730 hours, four MI-8 helicopters took off under the command of Major Liaqat Asrar Bokhari for Patuakhali where the helipads had been selected a day earlier. On reaching the target area they found that the PAF was already in action. Helicopters landed at the Patuakhali helipad. They were later informed by the SSG troops that the heliborne operation had achieved complete surprise and the rebels ran out of the battle area after suffering heavy casualties. There were no casualties of own troops.

Belonia - First Night Heliborne Operation

Belonia Operation {also known as Fenni Operation} has a very special place in the history of Pakistan Army and 4 Army Aviation Squadron, because it was for the first time, that helicopters were used to drop troops behind the enemy at night. It was an operation that was novel in its concept and highly successful in its outcome. It shows very vividly how the wits and imagination of a commander with a bold plan, when well executed can change the whole complexion of a battle.

Near Fenni, there is a salient about eight hundred yards wide and about two miles long protruding into Indian territory of Tripura called Belonia Salient, it is at this point that Pak-India border was thinnest; the major rail-road between Dacca-Chittagong is only few miles away from border. Thick jungles and hillocks were all under rebels control and within range of Indian artillery, supporting them. 24 Frontier Force and 20 Baloch Regiments were tasked to clear the area.

Situation

On 18 June at 1000 hours MI-8 piloted by Major Bokhari and Major Ali Jawahar, with General Rahim, General Officer Commanding 14 Division on board, were flying to Cox's Bazaar on a routine inspection. En-route, he decided to stop at Fenni the tactical headquarters of 53 Brigade, to get the latest briefing on the brigade advance in Belonia Bulge. General was informed that two pronged advance of two battalions (24 FF and 20 Baloch) started on the morning of 18th June 1971. The advance was restricted to the road due to water and mines laid all over the area. As soon as they started their advance, both the battalions faced stiff opposition by the well-sited enemy positions. The leading company of 24 FF was caught in the middle of a minefield and very accurate artillery fire had been brought on them. They suffered twenty-eight casualties and the advance was halted by 1000 hours. The general after some thought told Major Bokhari to proceed to Chittagong hill tracts and collect all available SSG troops located there; and get the other helicopter from Dacca to evacuate the casualties.

Major Syed Liaqat Asrar Bokhari and Major Ali Jawahar Khan flew to the Chittagong hill- tracts, Mahal Chiri, Rangamati, from where they collected twenty-two SSG personnel and brought them to Fenni. It was a frantic mission, as commandoes were spread in varying places and manning important posts, they were to be replaced with the loyal Chakma tribals',

and it took almost the whole day. They also registered a bridge en-route as checkpoint, little knowing, that it would play such an important role later on in the day. One major reason for this delay in collecting commandoes was the lack of communication between 14 Division and Headquarters Eastern Command. According to the then SSG commanding officer Brigadier Z.A.Khan, *“Major Nadir sent me a signal message, about the use of commandoes, I rang up the Chief of Staff Eastern Command who informed that permission had not yet been granted for their employment. I sent a signal message to Nadir to refuse their use. They were later flown to Fenni after dark.”* This delay almost proved fatal as helicopter had to make two sorties to fetch the force and landed back at Fenni at 1630 hours. The other MI-8 helicopter, piloted by Major Ali Kuli Khan and Major Patrick Tierney was summoned from Dacca to evacuate the casualties and then be available at Fenni for further commitments.

At 1630 hours only Major Ali Kuli and Major Patrick went for brigade commander orders as other helicopter had not yet landed back. After a drive of about twenty minutes the pilots arrived at the headquarters. The commander, after seeing them inquired about the other helicopter which had not yet arrived from its collection mission. Since the time was running short, General Rahim said, “Well they can be briefed later. They will be arriving shortly; I told them to collect as many commandoes as possible.” Brigade commander started giving his orders off a quarter inch map. he pointed to a place on the map apparently at rear of enemy positions and said, “Here helicopter force will land.” After the orders pilots met a lieutenant of the Baloch Regiment, looking bewildered and learnt that he was the commander of the troops they were to carry. He was a liaison officer in the brigade and the troops that he was to command belonged to the Frontier Force Regiment and the wireless set that they were going to carry was operated by crew of the brigade signals company. In short every one in the force was unknown to each other. The entire group was bundled into vehicles once again and brought to the helipad at Fenni. At this time it was approximately half an hour to last light and while the pilots hurriedly took some bearings and distance of borrowed maps the helicopter from the Chittagong hill-tracts arrived with its assortment of SSG troops.

Brigadier Bokhari, SJ recalls, *“After I landed I saw General Rahim at the helipad. General in his peculiar style, explained the latest situation, then he looked at the Captain of the MI-8, and said, ‘I have devised heliborne operation, Major are you ready?’ and I said, ‘Yes Sir, after all we are prepared for such eventualities.’ General explained the operation; aviators suggested that the force should be split in a way that helicopters should land between the forward and rear of enemy. ‘Okay’ General said,, we all have great expectations from you all.”*

A brief conference took place among the pilots, Major Bokhari got the briefing and devised the plan. He decided to adopt the dead reckoning method for aerial navigation, he also devised signals and various procedures for en-route and landing. The experience of Bhairab Bazaar came handy. PAF support was out of question due to close proximity of border, any violation would give the Indians excuse which they were looking for. As the darkness approached both helicopters took off. Major Bokhari and Major Jawahar were in the first helicopter along with Malang Shah (flight engineer). Second helicopter was piloted by Major P. C. Tierney and Major Ali Kuli. After take off the helicopters followed the road going from

Fenni to Chittagong till they hit the bridge in darkness. The bridge was important because it was from here that the two helicopters were to navigate to reach their objectives. Both helicopters climbed to about 3000 feet above ground level and after making a wide circle over the bridge they started their journey into the unknown. From the bridge, they were to fly for about three minutes on a bearing and then hoping that they were over the target they were to descend and land. The three minutes flight from the bridge proved uneventful, but once the descend started the nightmare began. The experience of descending down into the dark night, where pilot did not know what to expect coupled with the fact that the helicopters lost sight of each other, as there were no lights on, added hazard of air collision.

Major Syed Liaqat Asrar Bokhari and Major Ali Jawahar Khan were the first to land and disembark the SSG troops. Brigadier Bokhari still remembers, "In East Pakistan, area was full of tall trees, landing in darkness was like getting down in a well at night. I mostly relied on the altimeter and set the voice warning at five meters, also the crew chief had the doors open and was reporting the tail clearance, suddenly there was machine gun fire with tracers going all round, altimeter was at four meters. "SSG troops off-loaded in a minute under command of Major Nadir, it took 97 seconds to get airborne again. The second helicopter was not as lucky with its assorted troops, because it took them exactly twenty minutes of "convincing" before the troops got off the helicopter. This helicopter kept hovering for twenty minutes and went to about six places within a radius of a thousand yards but every time they selected a place they got the same answer from troops, "there is water here." Eventually the pilot convinced them that the entire area is waterlogged. During this process when the helicopter was hovering in that area, they saw and heard quite a lot of gunfire and vary lights being fired. As luck would have it, this landing was made right in the centre of the Indian position. Forward company thought that their rear had been over-run by Pakistani heliborne force and the rear company assumed that both their forward companies were captured. In the panic they started firing at each other and suffered heavy self-inflicted casualties. The prolonged hovering of helicopter also caused confusion in the enemy's rank and file; they thought that quite a force had landed. The enemy, which had thwarted the advance of a complete brigade, got so frightened and jittery by this helicopter landing that they vacated the entire Belonia Enclave and withdrew to the Indian territory. Next morning, 24 FF and 20 Baloch resumed the advance without any resistance and captured the Belonia Bulge without any further loss.

This heliborne operation had been an unprecedented success. There was no casualty on own side.

Those Were the Days

Initially Army Aviation pilots dined in Eastern Command mess. The Beaver pilots had permanent accommodation at Dacca while PAF had its own Mess. Among Army Aviators Major Ali Jawahar and Major Patrick had families at Dacca. Mrs. Patrick remained at Dacca till the very end and on 14th December 1971 left for Burma.

In June –July 1971, 4 Army Aviation Squadron moved to Dacca from West Pakistan. They established independent mess in one of the vacant bungalows, it was probably the only time in pilots military career when married accommodation was in abundance but none was willing to take it. The squadron routine was simple and to the point. Flying was the only major activity but other military events like small arms firing and physical fitness were duly looked after. Squadron had a Land Rover as administrative vehicle

There was an unknown fear about the future. In the mess sometimes pilots would sit whole night in the lawn discussing policies and strategies. Leave was rotated for all ranks. Telephone calls to West Pakistan were cumbersome so letter writing was a good pastime. There was one cinema hall in the cantonment which was frequently visited. Lieutenant Colonel A L Awan remained in Dacca till September 1971 when Major Bokhari was promoted to take over the command. The contributions of Major Akram second in command, “The mother of the unit,” were commendable as he listened to all kind of suggestions and heart burnings from all corners and still behaved like a mother i.e. to cool down the father.

EASTERN FRONT

Low intensity conflict was going on in East Pakistan since March 1971. From 21st November 1971 onwards it became a limited war along the border belt involving air force of Pakistan and India. Indians were looking for an excuse for their expansion, whereas Eastern Command was stern in its objective of not giving up an inch of territory. There was apprehension that if Mukhti Bahini got enough of territory it might establish free Bangladesh.

Military Geography

East Pakistan had 4000 kilometers long border with India in the east, west and in the north. Only in the south, apart from Bay of Bengal, a narrow strip joins it with Burma. The tract along Pakistan-Burma is hilly and thickly forested. Airfields in East Pakistan were of World War-II era and situated at Dacca, Chittagong, Comilla, Shamshearnagar, Sylhet, Jessore, Ishurdi and Lal Munir Hat. Lack of communication in the province was an asset for the defender. Grain of the soil is from north to south. Terrain is plain except hilly area in the east. Vehicular movement was restricted to the roads even in dry season. Dacca was the capital and strategic target for any invader. It was connected with the rest of province through roads, rail and ferries. The three major rivers namely Ganga, Madhumati and Mehghna divide the province into four distinct military sectors. There was no rail or road bridge connecting any of the sectors, except Harding Bridge over Ganga and the bridge over Mehghna at Ashugang

North Western Sector. Indo-China border is quite close, major Indian communication life line runs precariously narrow, within own artillery range from the border.

Eastern Sector- The shortest approach to Dacca from India.

South Western Sector. Second nearest approach to Dacca. Indian state capital of Calcutta is just 90 miles from border in this sector.

Central Sector- A combination of Northern and Western Sector.

Lieutenant General Niazi's Strategy

“Troops on the border would fight on, until ordered to withdraw, while withdrawing to the fortresses; they would fight delaying actions in an attempt to exchange space for time. Finally they would occupy and defend the fortresses till the end”. Fortresses, Niazi referred were towns of Bogra, Rangpur, Mymen Singh, Jessore, Jhenid, Sylhet, Kamalpur, Bhairab Bazaar, Comilla, Chittagong and Dacca. For deception purpose he created adhoc divisional headquarters and brigades by removing staff and units from other formations. Thus almost all the formations were under strength. Niazi had ordered that withdrawal from the front would not take place unless 75% casualties occurred to the units.

Eastern Command

Formation	Location	Commander	Task
9 Division	Jessore	Major General Ansari	Defence of Jessore
16 Division	Nator	Major General Nazar Shah	Defence of North Bengal
14 Division	Dacca	Major General Majid Qazi	Defence of Eastern Borders
39 Division	Comilla	Major General Rahim	Defence of Comilla
36 Division	Dacca	Major General Jamshed	Defence of Dacca
97 Independent Brigade	Chittagong	Brigadier Atta Ullah	North/Central Sector

Armour

No.3 Independent Squadron {8 tanks}

29 Cavalry {Bengal Tigers}

Total: 64 tanks (including 12 x PT-76).

Air Force

No.14 Squadron PAF (16xSabres F-86E).They lasted till last light of 6 December 1971. (On 8 & 9 December pilots left for Pakistan via Burma).

Army Aviation Contingent in East Pakistan

4 Army Aviation Squadron was under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Syed Liaquat Bokhari, SJ (who was promoted in August 1971 and took over the command of the squadron from Lieutenant Colonel Latif Awan) narrates, “On my promotion, the squadron in Dacca was comprising of six MI-8s and four Alouette-III helicopters. However, keeping in view the operational requirements on the western side, one MI-8 helicopter was shipped back. The five MI-8 and four Alouette-III helicopters remained actively engaged till the end. There were three Beavers of the Plant Protection Department in Dacca; Major Sultan of

Army Aviation was their commander. Last reshuffling of pilots took place on 21st November 1971. Fixed wing pilots including Majors Ishaque, Sarfraz Rabbani SJ, Fayyaz Ibrahim, Maqbool "Mac" along with MI-8 pilot Major Askree went back to Pakistan and from Dhamial Major Masood Anwar an Alouette pilot joined at Dacca.

Indian Forces in the East

Commander: Lieutenant General Jagjit Singh Arora

2 Corps 4 Mountain Division

9 Mountain Division

2x Tanks Regiments

4 Corps 8 Mountain Division Eastern Sector

23 Mountain Division

57 Mountain Division

3rd Independent Armoured Squadron

2x Mechanised Battalions

8x Bengali Battalions

33 Corps 20 Mountain Division North Western Sector

71 Mountain Brigade Group

340 Mountain Brigade Group

69th Armoured Regiment

101st Communication Zone Central Sector

167th Mountain Brigade

95th Mountain Brigade Group

2nd Para Battalion

Conduct of Operations

General Arora's opening move of 21 November 1971, was in the North Western Sector, there by he secured his fragile logistic tail apart from a check on the Chinese in Tibet. The pitched battle in the Hilly Sector where 4 FF put up brave resistance forced Aurora to change his game plan, instead of clearing every pocket he resorted to, by passing the strong points. When all out war erupted on 3 December, Aurora had his forces 10-15 miles inside

East Pakistan in almost all the Sectors. From western approach he reached up till Jessore within three days. Aurora initially had no plan to capture Dacca; they had plans to capture the territory up till the river banks. General Niazi also had no plan and forces to defend Dacca, because for him it was not plausible that Indians could cross over three major rivers. Towards the end Indian paratroopers and heli borne landings made a significant difference

War Begins and First Two Missions

Soon after PAF air attacks on Indian airfields from West Pakistan on the evening of 3 December 1971, which was heard on MI-8 radio by Lieutenant Colonel Bokhari, as he was conducting the squadron night flying at Dacca, he passed the information to air traffic controller, and called off his night flying. Sure enough the Indian aircraft attacked Dacca Airfield at midnight. The war was on.

One Alouette with Major Masood Anwar and Major Tauhid had just touched Chittagong with GOC 39 Division on board, when it received these news. At 2300 hours Major Ali Jawahar and Major Zahoor flew to Maulvi Bazaar in a MI-8 with one platoon of SSG troops, and reached safely back home at 0015 hours. Another Alouette piloted by Major Nauman and Major Zareef proceeded to Rangpur with Brigadier Shafi.

Aviation Hangar Attacked at Dacca

On 4th December 1971 at about 0900 hours, hangar and office area of the aviation element in Dacca was subjected to enemy's strafing. One MI-8 was damaged and Major Wali Ur Rehman (EME) with six other ranks were injured. Naib Subedar Abdul Jalil, Naik Lutuf Ur Rehman and Sepoy Ramzan later embraced shahadat. Flight Engineer Naib Subedar Zulfiqar was also injured.

Same day at about 1000 hours the enemy carried out a massive air raid to render the Dacca Airport inoperative. Anti aircraft gunners {6 Light Ack Ack} and the small flock of Sabre fighters went into action. Some of the most spectacular dog fights were witnessed over Dacca. The large number of foreign reporters present in the city recorded a good account of the vintage Sabre F-86 aircraft of the PAF wrecking havoc on the best of the Russian fighter aircraft of India. As claimed, 17 Indian aircraft were shot down as against two of the PAF. One Alouette-III {Major Sagheer} immediately took off for search and rescue mission to recover own bailed-out pilots. But before the chopper could reach the area, the Mukti Bahini had taken the pilots away.

Army Aviators Become the Night Warriors

Due to Indian air superiority after the first three days the MI-8 and Alouette operations were conducted mostly during the night. The air strikes during the first three days were mainly concentrated on the airfield, which was being hit more frequently. The squadron pilots flew some of the most hazardous missions at a time when PAF was neutralized due to

enemy air superiority in the province. Flying low in pitch dark night without proper navigational instruments and equipment, was most dangerous; but the pilots were brave, they undertook missions like shifting of troops, ammunition, rations, evacuation of casualties and flying the commanders from one sector to another at night.

On 4/5th December at 2300 hours one MI-8{Major Jawahar & Major Riaz with Subedar Malang as the flight engineer }proceeded to Maulvi Bazaar with some troops and ammunition as reinforcement. The MI-8 was fired upon from the ground once it was short of landing area. A post flight amidst enemy fire revealed a bullet hole in the hydraulic tank. Flight engineer rectified the fault with the help of a wooden stick. After successful completion of the task, the helicopter returned to Dacca at 0300 hours. Similarly on the very next night one MI-8{Major Jawahar & Major Zahoor} was sent to Bogra with Major General Jamshed on board. Close to Bogra it faced very heavy ground fire and had to turn back to Dacca.

Ali Kuli's Nocturnal Forced Landing

On 7th December 1971, one MI-8 took off at 0100 hours to go to Khulna with machine guns, mortars and a heavy load of ammunition. Major Ali Kuli narrates, *"I and Major Jawahar were detailed for an ammunition dumping mission to Khulna. We went low level. It was 45 minutes going and 45 minutes coming back, the endurance of the helicopter was 2 hours. We drifted and could not find Khulna. After few minutes we started flying back and again drifted and lost our track. We gave call to Dacca radar which was known as 'Ginger Control' but to no avail. We spotted Chandpur which was lit up, a sign that this town was held by Mukhti Bahanis. It was 58 miles south east of Dacca. Soon 20 minutes fuel remaining warning light came on and also we heard the 'Ginger Control' directing us to Dacca but it was too late. We made a forced landing near Naryangang forest area. After landing we quickly camouflaged the helicopter and waited for the worst. We had personal weapons with us so we took positions. After some time we heard a voice and never before in my life I had heard such a soothing Punjabi "Kehra Hai" {who is it?}. It was a local Punjabi officer who later narrated that the rumours of Indian para troops was quite high and he was leaving his office to sort us out when telephone rang and he reluctantly turned back from the door to pick it up, it was about us from Dacca. That is how we were saved."* Fuel was immediately dispatched by road and the aircraft came back to Dacca the same morning.

MI-8 Survives own Ack Ack

On 8 December one Alouette-III{Major Zareef and Major Sagheer} took off at 0145 hours to take some officers to Chittagong and accomplished the mission safely. Major Bajwa and Major Zahoor, on same night 8/9 December 1971, were returning from Madaripur at 0400 hours after a mission. When the MI-8 was passing over Narayanganj, close to Dacca, own Ack Ack guns opened up all of a sudden, despite the known flight plan. Fortunately there was no hit as the guns were firing on fixed lines at night.

More Endurance for Helicopters

Number of forced landings and low fuel warning lights forced the Army Aviators in East Pakistan to increase the endurance by fitting MI-8 helicopters with additional fuel tanks. For Alouette-III, no such facility was carved thus when going on long trips, extra jerricans of fuel had to be carried on all Alouette Helicopters.

The First MI – 8 Crash

On 9th December 1971 at 0300 hours, Major Mohammad Akram with Major Manzoor Bajwa took off for Comilla with ammunition on board. As the helicopter took off, it hit a wire running closely and crashed to the ground. In the process the main rotors hit one huge banyan tree and half of the nearest barrack was missing. The lone soldier who was sitting on top of the ammunition boxes remained seated during this crash, unaware of all what has happened, he left his post only when captain of the helicopter, Major Akram came running and ordered him to run for safety. It was just a miracle that the crew and passengers came out safe. The helicopter was completely destroyed, but still it did not catch fire. Very next night, these two pilots again undertook missions. Major Akram flew with Major Riaz at 0200 hours, they flew to Khulna and dropped much needed ammunition and machine guns. Major Bajwa flew with Major Ali Kuli to Brahman Baria to drop troops.

Indian Paratroopers

During night 10/11 December 1971 the Indian 2nd Para Battalion troops were dropped at Tangail, 40 miles from Dacca. Brigadier Qadirs 93 Brigade of 36 Division was fighting a rear guard action involving 33 Punjab and 31 Baloch Regiments. At night when Brigadier Qadir and his staff were in the rest house they got the news that Chinese paratroopers have landed in aid, in fact they were the Indians who were dropped from Fairchild Aircraft. The Indian forces just got the tail of the force, but psychological impact was gained. The Indians later captured Brigadier Qadir and his staff. Same night one Alouette {Major Sagheer & Major Tauhid} at 0300 hours proceeded to Bogra and Rangpur to evacuate Major General Nazar. On 11th December, Major Jawahar and Major Ali Kuli proceeded to Khulna on a MI-8 with mortars and ammunition. At 0245 hours when they were short of Dacca intense enemy aerial bombing took place, a one thousand pounds bomb fell on the helipad; luckily the MI-8 diverted and landed after the raid was over.

Aricha Ferry Site-13th December

In link with the Indian para troopers, Major Tauhid ul Haque and Major Masood Anwar proceeded same night at 0300 hours to Aricha Ferry Site with sole engineer soldier on board, he had to operate the ferry for getting the troops across the river to counter Indian Paratroopers. As the helicopter was returning to Dacca it was caught in the own Ack Ack fire, since enemy air raid had come suddenly.

Comilla ‘Save Our Souls Mission’ -14th December 1971

117 Brigade commanded by hockey Olympian Brigadier Atif was in Comilla Garrison located on the eastern border. Brigade was almost encircled by Indian forces and pounded day and night, Indians had further dropped heliborne forces near by. Despite Indians overwhelming majority the garrison stood to its flag. Ultimately there was an SOS call as the small arms ammunition was nearly depleted.

On the night of 13/14 December Major Bajwa and Major Zahoor took-off from Dacca after midnight with a load of ammunition. Flying time was about 30 minutes, there was no question of having any sort of navigation light on board or on ground. The procedure was to follow Dead Reckoning and then look down and find suitable place for landing. The peace time drills of having communication with the formation on ground was almost non existent in the last days of the war. Pilots were not even sure whether they would find own troops or enemy on landing. At a distance they could see the tracers and muzzle blasts in and around Comilla but where to land. As the pilots descended down they got the first burst of machine gun, the stadium in the middle of garrison was lighted to indicate the landing ground, MI-8 dashed to it before it is extinguished for the fear of air raid. There was constant shelling going on. Ammunition was off loaded and twenty eight casualties were hastily loaded in the MI-8. There was no time to check the helicopter for any damage during the shelling. They took off after a hasty start. Short of Dacca at 200 meters above ground suddenly a salvo of what seemed an Ack Ack fire passed close to the helicopter. Both pilots even to this day remember every second of that eventful flight. From about 15 miles Dacca was seen clearly under air attack. When only ten miles out the Radar controller repeated the pre-designated danger warning code word. We were over the vast spread of the river bed and resorted to flying a figure 8 at barely 50 meters height, yet the controller Flight Lieutenant, Ishtiaq would not stop repeating the warning. After holding for about 30 minutes, the pilot proceeded towards Dacca despite refusal of permission by the controller, as the fuel was running low. The landing was made while the Ack Ack guns were still active during another air strike.

After landing the pilot phoned the controller as he had requested. He conveyed that we were lucky to leave the holding area, contrary to his directions. He stated that Agartala Radar Controller had directed one MIG-21 from the strike over Dacca to engage us. We could not be located due to our very low level. Later one transport plane, which used to do blind bombing for nuisance over Dacca, was guided to our holding position. Fortunately we pulled out before its arrival at the site. The plane reportedly dropped several flares trying to locate us. The 28 critical casualties ostensibly ‘Saved Our Souls.’

MI-8 Prepared for Bombing

As the news of Indian paratroopers started pouring in from various sectors. General Niazi directed that MI- 8s be prepared for bombing the enemy para troops at Tangail. The pilots were excited at the prospects of this unusual fighting role. Most were aspiring for the first mission.

At 0300 hours 13th December one MI-8 was fitted with the rollers on the floor for easy dispensing of the bombs. When the squadron commander, requested for the targets quadrants or the specific area required for neutralisation, he was told to locate and engage the enemy on his own. The entire night was spent in suspense. 4 Squadron War Diary has following entry, "Lieutenant Colonel Bokhari, SJ and Major Riaz Ul Haque, SJ prepared one MI-8 for bombing mission at 0300 hours with Rollers fitted. 500 pound bombs were to be dropped at Tangail and Narsingdi by MI-8 helicopter, which was never done before. But at the last moment the mission was cancelled. Again the same MI-8 was ordered to proceed for bombing but on the eleventh hour the mission was again cancelled."

On 15th December 1971 once again MI-8 was ordered by Commander Eastern Command himself to bomb Indian troops at Narsingdi at 1830 hours but as Lieutenant Colonel Bokhari and Major Riaz Ul Haque were about to take off, it was cancelled by commander. During the last enemy air raid, 7 bombs fell only about 100 yards away from one of the MI-8 helicopter parked at 19 Signal Battalion ground. The rotor blade buckled slightly. It was made fly worthy after necessary hammering to streamline the buckled blades.

General Niazi Declines Permission for Escape

Lieutenant Colonel Bokhari, Commanding Officer 4 Army Aviation Squadron, daily attended the evening conference at Headquarters Eastern Command, chaired by General Niazi. On 14 December 1971 it was apparent that General Niazi had decided to accept Indian offer of surrender. This decision was communicated to squadron officers, in the daily briefing of the squadron which was held after return from Eastern Command by the colonel. It was also conveyed that General Niazi had declined our request for escape with the helicopters to Burma. As the writing was already on the wall, squadron officers had discussed the possibility of escaping, instead of surrender. Escape after surrender is the right of every soldier as given by Geneva Convention, so why to destroy or hand over our helicopters to Indians. Why not to take them back to Pakistan and use them to fight for another day, after all the war in West Pakistan was still going on. However as luck would have it, the formalities for cease-fire could not be completed and the process was delayed by one day.

Decision for Helicopters Escape Obtained

In 15 Decembers' conference, it was officially conveyed that the high command at Dacca had accepted the Indian offer of a cease fire and the surrender was scheduled for 16 December morning. It did not come as a surprise because the Headquarters Eastern Command had become quite unnerved since the Indians had on 7 December night dropped heli-borne troops at Tangail, some 40 miles north of Dacca. On the same night of 15 December 1971 Chief of Staff Eastern Command (Late Brigadier Baqar Siddiqui) while passing the instructions for the unfortunate surrender, ordered the destruction of all heavy equipment including guns, tanks and helicopters/aircraft. Lieutenant Colonel Bokhari narrates, "I persuaded and managed to get permission from Lieutenant General Niazi, to fly out the helicopters to Pakistan via Burma. General Niazi was reluctant in giving the

permission to army helicopters flying out of Dacca to Akyab {Burma}. Vice Admiral Sharif, the Naval Commander supported the idea and matter was referred to General Gul Hassan, Chief of General staff, who promptly agreed.

However one Alouette-III Helicopter along with two pilots and one engineer had to stay behind in Dacca to be at the disposal of the Eastern Command. It was further directed that only ladies nominated by the Eastern Command, would be taken along, including the fifteen nurses of Combined Military Hospital.

Planning the Escape Flight

The load capacity of MI-8 with additional fuel tanks was ten passengers each. It was a difficult task nominating people under such conditions. Brigadier retired Bukhari continues "I being the commanding officer decided to draw lots amongst the Alouette pilots. Names of Major Tauhid and that of Major Zareef were drawn while Major Ejaz from EME was an obvious choice being the only engineer officer for Alouette-III helicopter. The escape was planned for early morning during darkness. The three serviceable MI-8 helicopters and the four Alouette-III were positioned and dispersed at sunset, in the golf course, parallel to the Dacca Airport, for an early morning departure.

During the briefing pilots were tasked to take off between 0300 hours and 0335 hours on 16 December 1971. The helicopters were to take off individually at five minutes interval. The MI-8s were to take off following Beavers of the Plant Protection Department, followed by slower flying Alouettes. The Alouettes were to carry additional fuel for en-route refuelling. Normal route from Dacca to Chittagong and along the straight coast up to Akyab in Burma would be the easiest route which we did not wish to follow for obvious reason of safety. It was decided that from Dacca helicopters will proceed south for 20 miles to avoid Ack Ack guns at Narayanganj. Next in order to get away from Agartala Radar they were to turn south east and intercept Fenni River to follow upstream, leading them across the mountain range running parallel to the coastline. From this point they were to head for the prominent railway bridge over River Karnafhuli, in the valley. This railway bridge was the last check point, from where pilots were to fly on magnetic compass bearing

All other much shorter routes passed over much higher mountains covered with thick forests and hostile tribes. It would not facilitate refuelling of Alouettes on the way. Major Bajwa was detailed to fly last and was made responsible for providing search and rescue cover to anyone forced landing en-route. Strict wireless silence was to be observed. No internal or external lights of any kind were to be used. The crew would carry weapons and dump all the remaining weapons, cameras, identification documents including flying log books and passports into the sea, shortly before landing at Akyab on the western coast of Burma. The minimum flight time of MI-8 would be over 2 hours and 30 minutes, therefore requiring at least three hours fuel endurance.. After the briefing pilots were all dispersed at 2100 hours to make preparations for the departure.

Havildar Malang Bokhari was one of the flight engineers in this formation. He narrates, "At around evening we got the rumour of escape, later we were told to hide the

helicopters marking, which we did by applying what so ever we could find to do so. There were families of squadron troops still residing at Dacca,naturally parents were quite worried, especially about their young girls. Many had already briefed them what to do in case of being captured, which was suicide.”

The Escape Night

At 0200 hours pilots proceeded to the golf course. It was impossible to gain access although the helicopters were parked at different locations in the golf course and cantonment, yet each helicopter had a big crowd around it. The news of escape had spread like a jungle fire in the cantonment. Lieutenant Colonel Atif Alvi was then a boy of seven years, his father was a lieutenant colonel in the Eastern Command, he narrates, *“We were six brother and sisters, around midnight my father came in a hurry and told my mother to pack up. My mother packed few bags and I before leaving grabbed my cricket bat. In the jeep we reached a school where one big helicopter was parked, it was night and people were shouting and crying,there was no space available on the helicopter.My father took us in jeep to another place and there we got a place on the helicopter, we had to leave everything before boarding including my bat. My father stayed back”*. Another family, who luckily escaped on the same night, unknown to the girl, years later she got married to an aviator {Brigadier Mohammad Tahir}.She writes, *“ At night some one knocked at our doormy father told us {three sisters and mother}to pack....we went in an army truck, in which many people were seated....we reached a forest {golf course}.My mother tied mine and my other sisters frock together....there was hue and cry....later we sat in a cramped helicopter and my father’s parting words were, “Allah Kay Hawalay.”*

At 0300 hours on 16 December the pilots and engineers who were to leave, prepared in the stillness of the night. It was a dramatic sight to see more than 200 people some even with heavy luggage in the vicinity of the helicopters. Each helicopter exceeding their capacities were loaded with women and children cuddled with each other having strange expressions of scare and fright.

Major Bajwa recalls: “Due to long range and expected three hours of flying, internal fuel tank was installed and filled with additional ferry tank containing one ton extra fuel. The ferry tank warranted removal of 11 seats. Even load wise the helicopter retains configuration of 10 passengers and a crew of three, a total of 13 persons’ capacity. When I managed to get to my MI-8 helicopter, I was shocked to see the rear half of the cabin full of trunks, suitcases and bags, piled up to the ceiling and only a handful of passengers on the seats. I ordered all baggage to be taken out. Ultimately it was the crew that had to physically throw it out personally. Requesting for peace, I announced that only ladies were to board and no individual was to carry any baggage, as we intend to carry an overload of passengers to save maximum lives. The crowd was naturally unmanageable as would be expected under such conditions. There were hundreds of hysteric passengers, each one trying to get in first.. We proceeded to load the passengers. There was an uncontrollable stampede, despite two of us at the door. Each passenger carried dry food items like biscuits, which mostly dropped, while milling through the door and were crushed on the floor in the rush. Once full to the top it was

dilemma to close the sliding door with so many ladies still stuck in the door, desperately trying to board. I managed to push the remaining female crowd with my back, taking support of the helicopter and help from the crew. With difficulty the crew managed to slide the door shut. It was not possible to estimate the number of passengers. I urged everyone to remain calm through the flight, not to light matches, smoke or to draw curtains from the windows. The glass windows were blinded with mud for safety. The passengers were briefed not to panic or shuffle around in case of ground fire or consequent injury, but remain calm and composed in the interest of flight safety. Major Zahoor Ahmed the co-pilot was on the ground trying to manage the crowd. There was no way for him to get in except the cockpit door. He was helped in''.

One Alouette Failed to Start

Meanwhile, Major Saghir and Major Masood Anwar along with the crew chief and two others, arrived at the site, north of Dacca City, where their helicopter was parked. Lieutenant Colonel Masood writes, "We settled in our seats, strapped, Major Saghir and myself kicked the starter. Oh hell! The battery did not respond. In desperation, Major Saghir made 2/3 attempts in quick succession. By now whatever little strength the battery had was totally drained out. The show was over. We abandoned our efforts of attempting any further restarts. We stepped out of the helicopter, took a deep breath and drove back to the living quarters."

Nurses Remained Seated, in the Ambulance.

Lieutenant Colonel Bokhari narrates," *It was 0330 hours and time was running short, but there was no news of nurses, I waited for another five minutes and then ordered start up of the helicopters. It was revealed years later that they {nurses} came but remained seated in the ambulance waiting for guidance. To this date I regret that they were left behind for whatever reason.*" Starting the chopper was an ordeal as the crowd was still under the main and the tail rotors and nothing would deter them. After start up when ready to take off, one couple approached cockpit window with a fervent request. The young captain and his wife begged, to take their only son to safety. Already overloaded, child was pulled in through the window.

Flight to Freedom

To pilots' great disadvantage the sky was covered with 8 octa clouds, completely overcast. Major Bajwa further recalls, 'Being the last one to take off at 0335 hours I briefly used the landing light, to enable me to take off most gingerly over the trees. I realised I had no margin for error, for lifting off from the fairly confined location, with the present overload. The night was fairly cool and the take off over the tall trees was a great problem. Leaving Dacca after spending the last two years of extensive flying was a nostalgia but the feeling was that of sadness, helplessness and dejection. Once established at 500 feet I handed over the controls to my co-pilot Major Zahoor, in order to relax my nerves and be readily

available for an emergency. Major Zahoor had been my most frequent co-pilot over the last one year, enough to develop a strong mutual bond. With complete overcast sky and consequent pitch darkness, nothing was visible through the windscreen. We partly slid opened both side cockpit windows, hoping to be able to get some visibility through the corner of the eyes. Our instruments panel was very dimly lit to give us better vision outside. We had expected to be engaged by the small arms ground fire, from the enemy as well as our own troops, particularly during the first ninety minutes of the flying up to Chittagong. All along the way the crew kept exchanging notes by guessing the type of small arms fire we were occasionally drawing due to flight at low level. The passage of every minute was bringing greater hope, as the chopper was guzzling fuel and getting lighter and more easily manageable.

In pitch darkness due to overcast sky, we missed the bridge over Karnafhuli River, passing barely at 800 yards distance and had to make a 360 degrees turn to locate and set for final course.

Between the bridge and the border there were two small detached hills, which had to be circum-navigated without any chance of being able to see the features. During the first one hour of our flying we were to fly below 500 feet above ground level to avoid Indian interception as we were in the close range of Agartala Radar on our left flank,. Cox's Bazaar Radar was under enemy occupation with the aircraft carrier Vikrant positioned in the vicinity. We were not certain about the night interception capability of the enemy's carrier borne fighter aircraft. Nevertheless we could not avoid Cox's Bazaar due to higher hill features towards the east and had to pass within 10 miles of the radar, relying on our low level flight and hoping for the best.

Beyond Cox's Bazaar we were to pass through low hill features running parallel to our flight path. At 0515 hours we crossed the border into Burma. As the passengers were conveyed the good news they all heaved a sigh of relief. At around 0545 hours, gradually there was beginning to be some light on the horizon. I pondered for a few minutes in disbelief. We seemed to have drifted well into the sea. Where did we went wrong? How come the sea has a few pointed pinnacles jutting out? If we were not on the correct route despite our best navigation, where the hell were we? We did not have more than 45 minutes of remaining fuel, with so many lives at stake. I carried on in good faith assuming the sea had flooded the shore in unusual high tide. A few minutes later I saw a sizable hole through it. Soon I realised the surface was rather whiter than water. Soon it came to light that we were flying over a neatly compressed and continuously spread out layer of fog on the coastal areas. After a while, it started thinning and breaking up in patches, to disclose the isolated habitation, with early morning smoke emerging from most farmhouses. It turned into a most soothing sight for the remaining 15 minutes of flying before landing at Akyab, which is a manned airport with regular commercial flights and a small naval base. Before landing we veered off into the sea to dump all our weapons, cameras and everything that could identify us".

On Finals for Akyab

We continued maintaining radio silence for fear of refusal of landing permission. When I turned into the finals at Akyab, the sun was rising from behind the low hills to the east. It was a clear morning and some sense of relief was now over taking us. But this relief was a strange phenomenon, it was with a very heavy over tone of sadness. Losing half of the country to our arch rival India was very disappointing and dejecting feeling. Who was responsible? Where did we go wrong? Would we be together again? How would we avenge this ignominy and fall from grace? What impact was left on the historical canvas of India by Tipu Sultan, Ghauri, Ghaznavi and what impact we are now making? These questions hurt me, some feeling of guilt overtakes me but I shrug it off and think of it as a collective guilt not a personal one. Sight of Akyab Airfield brings me back to immediate reality. All the other helicopters had already landed safely.

As the helicopter landed the authorities rushed to the helicopter and instructed everyone to remain on board. When allowed to disembark a manifest was prepared. I looked at the crowd of passengers in disbelief as the list ended on Serial 43. It seemed like a miracle how the MI-8 carried all the forty three souls to safety with over three hours of fuel and reduced space in the cabin."

Lieutenant General Ali Kuli narrates, "Myself, Major Akram and Major Jawahar were to take off as number 2 in the formation at 0330 hours. Our helicopter had dented rotors which restricted the pay load. There were families with luggage but in the end we had only ladies and one odd young boy. This young boy is a major in the army now and every year without fail he rings or meets me in December.

We somehow were the first to land at Akyab Airport, Burma. As we switched off at intersection a Burmese soldier approached and asked us in Urdu, "Are you Pakistani? We replied yes, we are. He inquired are you Muslim? We replied in affirmative. He then said my name is Mustapha Kamal and I am a Muslim too."

The other two MI-8s had carried thirteen souls and twenty eight souls (including 8 infants) respectively. One Army Alouette piloted by Major Nauman and Major Patric Tierney along with one PAF Alouette piloted by Squadron Leader Sultan and Flight Lieutenant Rashid also landed safely. The total number of the passengers came to 123, including those flown in other two Alouettes and three Beavers of the Plant Protection Department. They were all taken to a rest house with hurriedly spread out concertina barbed wire and armed guards, all around the rest house.

The only aircraft to hit by ground fire was a Beaver, whose pilot got a bullet hit on his leg. This Beaver landed at Akyab with eleven souls on board. The Beaver Flight was commanded by an Army Aviator, Major Sultan, who was on a deputation with Plant Protection Department. PIA Twin Otters had already reached Akyab from Dacca on the night 13/14 December, Mrs. Major Patrick Tierney escaped on this night from Dacca. It was she who rang the Burmese authorities at Akyab and innocently informed them that her husband is an Army Major and not a civilian as they perceived.

Remaining Two Alouettes Also Escaped Dacca

As per original planning only one Alouette was to stay behind at Dacca; however the second Alouette after failing to start also stayed back at Dacca. Lieutenant Colonel Masood Anwar writes, "Once we reached back our mess after abortive start, while we sat, trying to draw inspiration from each other, some of our technical personnel belonging to aviation detachment walked over. They knew all but two helicopters had flown to Burma the previous night. They showed inquisitive concern for this sudden development and obviously the anguish that flowed across their faces was starkly meaningful. They had come in search of that leadership which they so hopefully and wittingly needed at that moment of trial. One could sense the subservience and instant expectation upon their faces. The fact that they did not declare was even more painful. Today when I write, the thought of that instance makes my face flush with a feeling of guilt, a sense of failure in doing my duty of leading my men through the distress of war.

Around 1130 hours on 16 December 1971 we decided to pay a visit to the Eastern Command Headquarters. On reaching there we found the staff in a state of haste and confusion. Apparently there was some kind of negotiations in progress with the United Nations officials regarding surrender proceedings. Later we learnt that surrender was planned to take place at Dacca Stadium at about 1300 hours. The Indian General in Command, General Aurora was due to fly into Dacca and supervise this ceremony. The time was 1230 hours. In the midst of this confusion, we decided to drive back to the mess and wait."

"En-route our jeep crossed a flagged jeep. We recognized the occupant to be Air Officer Commanding PAF. He too, noticed and waved at us to stop. We stopped. The Air Vice Marshall said, 'What are you doing here?' Sir, we are at the disposal of the Eastern Command and so far there are no orders for us, Major Saghir replied. 'Look surrender is going to take place within an hour from now. Nobody is going to give any orders to you. Get out as quickly as you possibly can'. Before he drove away he asked us to carry along Squadron Leader Masood of the PAF Helicopter Squadron. The squadron leader joined us at that moment. We looked at each other and in a split second reaction we decided to leave. There was rush of energy and we felt re-energized with the thought that there was a escape chance we could avail with the will of ALLAH. The drive through the streets of Dacca Cantonment was in a noticeable hurry. Suddenly to our surprise, we sighted an open jeep with an Indian flag. There were 4/5 Indian soldiers dressed up in commando uniforms seated with an air of arrogance visible. They were surely the advance party who had arrived to secure Dacca Airport.

We arrived at the location of the first helicopter. Major Tauhid, Major Zareef and Major Ejaz Minhas were there and we conveyed them the message too. Major Zareef Bangash had already gone in the morning to the Eastern Command, where initially he was told to wait, as he would be flying the both generals, one conqueror and other conquered, later no more was told thus they were waiting at the Helipad.

Major Sagheer and I proceeded ahead towards Kurmitola where our helicopter was parked. On arriving there, we were lucky to have found it intact. While I prepared for take off, I silently admired the thoughtfulness of Major Saghir, who had remembered to procure a serviceable battery from the squadron technical store. With battery replaced, the engine responded at the very first attempt and with in minutes we were airborne. More than flying, I was keeping a hard look outside, watching out for enemy jet aircraft. Since Major Saghir flew quite low, might be 40-50 feet above the ground, my eyes began to strain from watching the flow of objects passing by in quick succession.

After take off, we followed a southerly bearing. Within 30 minutes of flying we were clear of inhabited area and flew over marshy terrain, which lay on the fringes of the Bay of Bengal. All effort was afoot to avoid as much of built-up area as possible against the instinctive-ness of most helicopter pilots of flying close to built-up area, but here we were trying desperately to avoid habitation. With no untoward incident between then and the time we left Dacca, some of the tenseness eased out and we felt relatively relaxed. Major Saghir handed over the controls to me and stretched himself to squeeze some of the stiffness out from his body. I must admit, he had a sharp sense of judgment for navigation, because even at that low level we made random turns to the left and right to avoid habitation and after 30/40 minutes flying due South, we made a 90 degrees turn to the left and headed due East. Between here and up to about 45 minutes of flying was the most difficult phase of our mission. The reason was one that the area underneath was relatively clear and afforded less cover and two, that we were to pass quite close to the site of Indian radar installed on a high ground towards the left of our flight path.

Thirty-three years have passed but whenever I think of time I always imagine, the finiteness and the insignificance of human-beings in relation to time and space. It makes me wonder how fear of death acts as a purifier and makes one noble. By then, we had flown almost 2 hours and 15 minutes. About that time we must have entered the Burmese Territory.

We felt relieved. There was sense of achievement. While I enjoyed and wondered at the denseness of the forest, I observed low fuel warning light flickered on the instrument panel. No sooner did the light turn steady then we started manoeuvring in search of a suitable space to land the helicopter. Believe it or not, it took us nearly ten minutes to locate a suitable site. Helicopter was not switched off. Two persons were posted as guards around the helicopter with their loaded weapons, while we did refuelling from jerry-cans placed earlier in the helicopter. Within minutes helicopter was ready to fly off and once again we set course for our destination Akyab. We must have arrived fairly close to Akyab when radio contact was established with the control tower. For the first time, after Dacca, we heard radio transmission of the second Alouette helicopter. It was really heartening to hear them. Evening was approaching and we were hurrying to get to Akyab before sunset. About 10 minutes short of the town, we decided to abandon our weapons since these would have created serious complications had the Burmese authorities received us with weapons. Therefore in a nearby lake, helicopter was brought to hover over water and everyone threw his weapon, ammunition and any other military equipment including flying coveralls etc, so

that upon arrival at the airport we could declare ourselves as civilians. This was part of the instructions received during briefing for this mission.

At last the moment had come, the control tower cleared us for landing. We had the second chopper in sight. Both landed one after the other and were directed into the parking area where helicopters which flew in the previous night, had been parked. At Akyab, since morning the already landed crew of Army Aviators had a depressing day, the uncertainty about the missing Alouette {Major Sagheer and Major Masood} caused panic which overtook every one at Akyab. In the evening when the typical Alouette turbine whine was heard, it turned into a pleasant surprise.

Land of Buddha

Within hours of landing the Pakistan embassy staff arrived from Rangoon for supervision. All Pakistanis were fairly well looked after. After four days the families were separated and taken to another house. On the same day the pilots were taken to the airport to have a look at their helicopters parked on the apron. To their dismay they discovered that three days of parking in the sun had partly melted the camouflage on the markings on the helicopters. Disguise of civilians was no longer valid. All the defence personnel were taken to the naval base where they were asked to disclose personal identifications. When pilots returned after interrogation there was a lot more barbed wire and the guards around their rest house however living conditions and food got better after identification.

WAR IN THE WEST

Bird's Eye View

War in the East Pakistan had started on 21st November 1971.. At 1745 hours 3rd December 1971, own Jet Fighters attacked forward Indian Air Bases; War in the West Pakistan had also started.:

Pakistan Army's Strategy

Pakistan Army's Strategy in 1971 according to Lieutenant General Gul Hassan contained two ingredients; 'First, formations other than those in reserve were to launch limited offensives, secondly a major counter offensive was to be launched concurrently in to India.' The first ingredient of launching limited offensive went as per plan; however the master stroke of counter offensive never materialized.

8 Division (Major General Malik)

It captured a small enclave 'Dharm' on the River Ravi during night 4/5th December 1971 as part of the 'Offensive-Defensive' operations in Northern Punjab. India reacted by launching corps size attack in Shakargarh area. Pakistan's 8 Armoured Brigade was employed on 13th December onwards to stem the Indians tanks moving towards Gujranwala.

11 Division (Major General Majid)

Moved across the border on the night of 3rd December, took the bridge over the River Sutlej and captured Hussainiwala. In retaliation Indians captured Shujra Enclave, thus creating a stalemate in this sector.

23 Division (Major General Iftikhar Janjua)

23 Division's operations were the silver lining of Pakistan Army operations in Western Theatre during 1971 War. 23 Division under Major General Iftikhar Janjua, fought an intense and high casualty battle in the Chamb area and put Indians on defensive. Lodgment was made on the far bank of Munanwar Tavi. Chamb was taken on 8/9th December, unfortunately on 10th December 1971 General died as a result of burns/injuries sustained in a helicopter crash. Sector became stale.

18 Division (Major General Mustafa)

18 Division was tasked to venture into the desert and go for Jaisalmer town in Rajasthan. Lack of air cover resulted in disaster for this formation. Story of Pakistan Army records: "Ill fate had nothing to do with the failure of 18 Division's attack against Ramgarh (45 miles north of Jaisalmer). The Air Chief was in General Headquarters on the morning of 4th December when he heard that 18 Division was to launch an attack towards Jaisalmer. He asked the CGS, Lieutenant General Gul Hassan, "Why the Army was springing the sudden surprise on the PAF, Gul Hassan replied, "Divisional Commander had a good plan and that ...He will jump into Ramgarh one day and the next day will be in Jaisalmer." The disaster was nothing to do with terrain; it was entirely to do with lack of air cover by the PAF, which had warned against the very situation that occurred. Chief of General Staff Gul Hassan wrote in his memoirs: "For the debacle in the desert, I hold myself blameworthy as the Chief of General Staff."

Dhamial Army Aviation Base

Dhamial Army Aviation Base was commanded by Brigadier Jabbar, under his wing were three Composite Squadrons of four flights each, located at different stations, with a part of 5 Army Aviation (Rotary Wing) Squadron (KKH) at Dhamial, 4 Squadron was in East Pakistan. 199 and 299 EME Battalions along with 503 Aviation Base Work Shop were also under his command. Unlike previous war, the Composite Squadrons were now under the

operational command of the Corps. Since early November 1971, all the Composite Squadrons were in operational areas.

At 0730 hrs on 24th November 1971, state of emergency was declared. Dispersal of aircraft and stores was carried out at Dhamial, Fateh Jang and at Ranial Strip to avoid pre-emptive air strike. On 26th November 1971 at Dhamial, civil aircraft including one Aero Commander (Governors' Fleet) and two Beavers from Plant Protection Department arrived on requisition for use in emergency along with pilots maintenance crew and spares.

Second batch of French built light observation helicopters already under contract, were waiting transportation from France. As the war clouds appeared, the need was felt to expedite the delivery of these useful machines. Brigadier Jabbar made hectic efforts to tide over problems and dispatched Major Farhat Burki {199 EME Battalion} to Karachi to resolve the transportation issue with PIA. Major Burki met then Chairman PIA Mr. Rafiq Sehgal and resolved the issue in one meeting. The entire batch was airlifted in 24 hours and by end November 1971 these new Alouettes were air tested and ready to go into battle.

1 Army Aviation Squadron

1 Army Aviation Squadron was located at Mangla and it moved to Rahwali by 9th November 1971. It was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Aslam Janjua and its one flight and the Squadron Headquarters remained at the beckoning of Headquarter 1 Corps.

No.1 and No.2 Flights with three L-19s each were located near Qila Soba Singh to support 8 Division and 6 Armoured Division.

Major Anwar Mohiuddin – Flight Commander

Major Shah Alam

Captain Abid Hussain

No.3 Flight with two L-19s was located at Ugoke village to support 15 Division.

Major Zafar Hussain Siddiqui -Flight Commander

Captain Imtiaz Alam

Captain Aftab Ahmed Khan

No.4 Flight with two L-19s and one OH-13 (S) was located near Kotla to support 23 Division. It later moved to Padhar.

Major Saeed Ismat Chaudhry – Flight Commander

Major Muhammad Shahbaz Khan

Major Sajid Islam

2 Army Aviation Squadron

2 Army Aviation was located at Lahore before the start of war and was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Mir Hujjat Saqlain. In November 1971 its headquarters moved to Miraka near Manga Mandi to provide support to Headquarters 4 Corps. One of its flights moved to Bonga Hayat to support an Independent Brigade. The second flight was deployed east of Lahore in the general area of Rangers Headquarters to support 10 Division. Its third flight was located at Kasur Strip to support the operations of 11 Division.

Squadron Headquarter at Miraka {near Manga Mandi}

No. 5 Flight- This flight before the war had moved to Bahawalpur and supported the operations of 25 Brigade and on 18th November 1971 it moved to Wasalewala.

Major Jamshed Niazi-Flight Commander

Major Muhammad Umar

No.6 Flight- East of Lahore in support of 10 Infantry Division.

Major Tayyab Ahmed- Flight Commander

Major Moeenuddin

Captainl Anwar Ul Haq

No.7 Flight-Gujranwala in support of 6 Armoured Division and 17 Infantry Division:

Major Khalid Saeed Khan- Flight Commander

Major Muhammad Qasim

Major Ikram ullah

Major Tasnim Hayat Malik

Major Zahir Shah

No.8 Flight- Rukhanwala Strip in support of 11 Infantry Division:

Major Saleem Mirza

Major Humayun Malik

Major Minhaj and Major Qurban of 2 Squadron were attached with Frontier Corps at Peshawar.

3 Army Aviation Squadron

3 Army Aviation Squadron was located at Multan before the start of the war. Lieutenant Colonel Taleh Mohammad Mian commanded it and moved to battle location on 14th November 1971. Headquarters and one flight remained close to Headquarters 2 Corps at Sahiwal for its support. One flight was in support of 1 Armoured and 7 Infantry Division.

One flight remained at Multan and fourth flight was located at Rahim Yar Khan on 27th October 1971 and operated from Goth Machi, in support of 18th Division. Two sections of this flight went to support the actions of 55 Brigade at Chhor.

Lieutenant Ali Shafi of Pakistan Navy was also attached with the squadron; he was with Army Aviation for helicopter training.

5 Army Aviation Squadron

A new flying unit 5 Army Aviation Squadron was raised. Following officers were posted from 4 Army Aviation Squadron:-

5 Army Aviation Squadron, was split up. Its Alouette Flight was sent to Gilgit where as its MI-8 Flight stayed at Dhamial and was the reserve force of the aviation effort as and when required. It had three MI-8 on its strength.

Northern Sector

The first sortie took place on 4th December 1971 at 0655 hours in Alouette- III No. 1456 piloted by Major Badr; it was a casualty evacuation mission. On the same very day 4 more sorties were flown from Gilgit to Astor, Humzigund and Dhamial, mainly for causality evacuations. From 4th December till the last day of war, pattern remained same, although General Officer Commanding 12 Division was also flown in Hajira area. MI-8s did not fly a single sortie except on 14th December when it flew from dispersal area to Dhamial for half an hour.

Central Sector {Sialkot-Kasur}

Dharam Enclave- First Day of War

At 0600 hours 4th December 1971 No.2 Flight's pilots learned about the developments of night 3/4 December from 8 Division Operations Room, regarding capture of Dharam Enclave.

Major Anwar proceeded in a L-19 to the area at 0645 hours for artillery shoots; he came back after 1 hour as he could not establish communication. Major Anwar after changing his aircraft flew another sortie of 3 hours and 15 minutes over Dharm Enclave. He observed enemy tanks at three different places and engaged them effectively with artillery fire.

At 1315 hours, Captain Abid Hussain went on a mission to go over the Forward Defensive Localities to locate enemy tanks. When he had gone 3 miles inside Indian territory, he was located by enemy fighter aircraft. Captain Abid was without an observer and he was attacked three times by a jet and it chased him up to 10 miles inside our territory, he remained safe mainly because of being calm and his skilled handling.

Dera Baba Nanak Railway Station is engaged

At 1310 hours on 5th December 1971, in retaliation to the IAF bombing of Narowal Railway Station, No.2 Flight was asked to engage Dera Baba Nanak Railway Station. Flight Commander and observer Major Anwar/Captain Abid, flew across River Ravi to accomplish the mission. Major Anwar commenced ranging of railway station with medium guns and during that process two enemy jets appeared in the area. These jets were spotted well in time. Railway Station was damaged badly and the L-19 aircraft landed back safely after 2 hours and 15 minutes of flying.

Kasur

At 0730 hours on 6th December 1971, Major Saleem and Captain Humayun took off from Kasur, after getting briefing from divisional headquarters and coordination of frequency with divisional artillery. Their task was to locate the enemy armour. They flew along the Forward Defended Localities at tree top level. Abeam Mehdipur pilots detected tanks through kicking of dust. Major Saleem called medium artillery fire.

Ugoke

At 0700 hours on 6th December 1971 at Ugoke, Major Siddiqui and Captain Imtiaz Alam got airborne for a mission of dropping message to our unlucky Infantry Company in Phuklian area surrounded by enemy. The message was to indicate the escape route to them. The pilots wanted to give cover to the company by artillery fire but could not establish communication with guns. They flew along the river through shelling and reached Khoje Chak. There the message was dropped successfully to our troops, majority of them managed to extricate themselves.

At 1100 hours on 6th December 1971 at Ugoke, Captain Imtiaz and Captain Aftab were tasked to locate enemy armour. The pilots flew over Chaprar and climbed high to observe as the visibility was bad, but it did not help. Captain. Imtiaz keeping in view formations headquarters concern for the tanks, decided to fly overhead area Chanor. He twice flew over this village remaining 20 minutes in enemy area but did not see any tanks instead he was fired upon by small arms..

Captainl Aftab engaged Wires and Crashed

In continuation of the search for enemy armour Captain Aftab met with a tragic end on 7th December 1971. While returning to Ugoke after having flown a reconnaissance mission with Havildar Ashraf; to confirm the presence of enemy tanks in area Chanor. It was evening and Captain Aftab could not see the wires since he was facing the sun. Both the occupants died on spot and were recovered the next day.

War Exploits of a Dashing Aviator

Major Saeed Asmat Choudhry, a graduate of Sandhurst Military Academy and Flying Instructor School Risalpur, an extremely bold aviator was the flight commander with 23 Division. He was awarded Sitara-I- Jurat in Chamb Sector. His highly promising military career came to an abrupt end when he unfortunately developed a heart ailment while performing as Chief of Staff in a corps headquarters. Having retired in 1992, Brigadier Asmat served as Ambassador of Pakistan in Baku. An impressive defence analyst, he frequently appears in media doing tough talk shows. He writes about the 1971 War : “No.4 Independent Flight comprising three L-19 aircraft and one OH-13 helicopter was raised from Aviation School Instructors and placed under command of 1 Army Aviation Squadron to support the operations of 23 Division in Chamb Sector. I was designated as the flight commander. I moved the flight to occupy an Advance Landing Ground (ALG) near Kotla where 23 Division was located. On 2nd December 1971, I decided to move the flight in close proximity of divisional tactical headquarters in Padhar.”

“On my very first mission I ventured in the enemy area. I came to a conclusion that it was not possible to carry any worthwhile observation into the enemy held terrain. Observation was seriously hampered by haze and smoke generated by very heavy artillery fire on both sides. The visibility was restricted to 1000 meters. I located an Indian heavy artillery regiment across Tawi and suggested to the division to call for an air strike. Initially they were skeptical of my adventure and doubted the veracity of the information and my report of flying so deep inside enemy territory. When I volunteered to act as a Forward Air Controller (FAC) to lead, guide and direct PAF aircraft inside the enemy territory, the credibility was restored. As an airborne forward air controller I effectively engaged two Mike Targets well inside enemy area. Next day was also very eventful when I engaged enemy positions and tanks concentration by Artillery shoot, my first Uniform Target.”

“On 5th December 1971, the leader of six PAF aircraft established communication with me to take on the Indian artillery regiment located by me a day earlier. The first run did not yield results as they failed to recognize the target. I decided to improvise and told the leader that he should keep me in sight and I shall approach the target and when I say “Target-Target” the guns would be up 12 O’clock 500 meters straight ahead. We managed to coordinate our respective positions but in the process we attracted a lot of flak to the extent that some enemy tanks seeing me so close to ground even fired at me with main gun. When I called out “Target-Target” the leader said negative target not identified, I decided to continue getting closer to the enemy gun position. When my aircraft was as close as 100 meters, he recognized the target and asked me to get out of their flight path. So I did and witnessed a most spectacular aerial attack. All the guns were virtually destroyed and some blown out of their pits. This was all over in minutes and the leader asked me if I had any other target for them. I had identified an ammunition dump in area north east of Palanwala the day before on my return trip from Jaurian. This was indicated and recognized with ease and destroyed.

At this time I observed four Indian MIG-21 Aircraft on the horizon. PAF jets left the area as they had successfully accomplished their mission and were at the edge of their fuel endurance limits. The Indian fighter aircraft pounced at me. No one had ever taught me the

evasive actions under such a situation. I was like a mouse being hunted by wild and hungry cats, I luckily escaped unscathed but when I was entering back in own territory, our own troops fired at me indiscriminately. I landed back at my ALG with six holes on the aircraft including the fuel tank and fuselage. Having replaced my aircraft I got airborne again. I noticed that the enemy had abandoned their positions in general area south of line Moel-Chamb and practically there was no enemy to be seen there. I now carried out an in-depth study to reconfirm the findings of my surveillance. Equipped with that very vital information I went to the Tactical Headquarters. As the enemy had identified the direction of our main effort, he had pulled out the troops from the southern sub sector to reinforce the defence. Our division was way behind in the implementation of its operational plan and was not getting the breakthrough. The situation at the headquarters was very grim and tense. After a lot of assurances and persuasion, I managed to convince the divisional commander to accept my report as authentic. Quickly the brave, determined and sharp General Iftikhar devised a new manoeuvre plan basing on the information provided by me. Next day 2 Armoured Brigade commenced its advance towards Chamb from the right in a southerly envelopment movement.”

1 Squadron War Diary records, “At 1300 hours on 5th December 1971, Major Saeed got airborne to direct PAF jets. Enemy artillery regiment located earlier by the pilot was indicated to strike leader. 11 guns were destroyed. While directing the jets Major Saeed got hit at three different places on his L-19 aircraft No 013. It was for the first time that divisional headquarters realized the importance and usefulness of Army Aviation aircraft not only to augment their efforts but as versatile part of war machinery. Information was passed to divisional headquarters that area south east of Chamb was not held strongly by enemy and attack from that direction would enhance our chance to reach Tawi.”

2 Armoured Brigade Moving into Missile Trap

Brigadier Asmat narrates “I was gratified to observe from the air the brigade conducting a set piece attack like a demonstration in peace time with preliminary artillery fire and smoke on its flanks and they did not encounter any opposition. I noticed the brigade had stretched itself and was going a bit too south in their advance towards Chamb. I was in the air, observing area ahead and to the flanks of their manoeuvre. Suddenly, I noticed some movement and a closer look revealed a well dug in position by a company of anti tank missiles (later confirmed as SS-11 Guard Company). I was alarmed and alerted. I tried to warn the armoured brigade commander of the impending danger by wireless. When I failed to establish communication I panicked because the lead tanks were getting closer and closer to the missile company. In desperation I decided to land my aircraft in front of the leading tank. The squadron commander, Major Shamshad came out and I gave him the information and asked him to change the intended path of manoeuvre. The brigade complied without fuss. Major Shamshad told me that I had landed my aircraft in a minefield. He helped me in turning around my L-19 to take off on my old tracks made by the landing. I had never thanked him formally and I would like to do so now. To protect the flanks of the moving

armoured brigade, I took several artillery shoots that day neutralizing potential threat with success and satisfaction.”

First to Enter Chamb-An L-19

Maneuver Plan had 2 Armoured Brigade carrying out a right enveloping move while 111 Infantry Brigade {Commanded by Brigadier Naseer Ullah Babar, SJ} was to push frontally for the division's objective, Chamb. The minefield had slowed down the move of the armoured brigade and by last light I saw them on the banks of River Tawi in area Chak Pandit. Headquarters had already given out the news to the nation that Chamb had fallen to our valiant forces.

“I was not to give up that easily and finally though very reluctantly Captain Tariq {GSO-3} was sent with me to verify the information. While flying over the area of operations, we found own troops digging two miles south-east of Chamb. The small town of Chamb was deserted and 2 Armoured Brigade was nowhere near it. Communication let me down once again. I landed the aircraft in a dusty field and told the commanding officer of 10 Baloch Regiment to occupy Chamb as the enemy had vacated it. We took off and the young Captain Tariq was really excited and asked me if I could land somewhere in Chamb. I landed the aircraft in a grassy field in Chamb, switched off the engines and started a long wait for own troop to arrive. We entered the Indian brigade command post and when we came back to the aircraft, four Indian SU-7s were on us throwing all sorts of munitions. It was a miracle that my little L-19 standing proud in the middle of the ground remained intact. I took off to urge 10 Baloch and 2 Armored Brigade who had stopped in their tracks after the air attack to resume their advance. I landed back at Chamb. It was in the late afternoon that 10 Baloch entered Chamb.”

General Iftikhar Janjua's Helicopter Crash

At 1500 hours on 9th December 1971 at Padhar, Major Sajid Islam flew Major General Janjua in operational area. This was Major Sajid's 19th mission in the last four days. After flying about 1 hour and 20 minutes, the pilot went for landing near a brigade headquarters. It was dusty and dust engulfed the aircraft. Before the helicopter could properly settle down, General Janjua attempted to get down and in the process his leg entangled with the cyclic control. This being a dual control helicopter, got out of control and the tail rotors hit a near by tree. Then for some time the helicopter was thrown around. The helicopter was still intact when it became motionless. The pilot unfastened his seat belt and came out of the wreckage. Major Sajid saw the general bent to one side and he approached his side. General's leg was stuck in the damaged helicopter and while he was still struggling, helicopter caught fire. The pilot got blinded and he found himself in fire. By this time officers and soldiers standing at helipad came forward. Next thing Major Sajid remembered was his treatment in Combined Military Hospital {CMH}, Kharian.

Night Rescue Mission by Major Saeed Ismat

At 1635 hours {same day} at Padhar, flight commander Major Saeed learned about the accident and he rushed to the scene and landed there. He learnt that both general and Major Sajid had been evacuated by road to Padhar, by 1725 hours. General was in precarious condition and Major Saeed volunteered flying him to Rawalpindi, a stretcher was improvised and fitted in L-19. At 2000 hour from Padhar, Major Saeed got airborne, aircraft was without instrument lights and it was a pitch-dark night. Pilot had an awful journey and after 50 minutes of flying, he landed at a lit up spot as a last resort, only to find himself in Kharian. Major General Iftikhar Janjua was admitted in Combined Military Hospital {CMH} Kharian. Major Sajid was evacuated to CMH Kharian by road. The General later expired in CMH Kharian on 10th December 1971. Major Sajid Islam recovered, rose to the rank of lieutenant colonel and unfortunately died in another air crash of Puma helicopter near Skardu. Ironically the second helicopter accident also ended in fire and brave Sajid Islam could not survive this one. This fatal accident robbed us of two very bold Army Aviators.

Southern Sector {Rahim Yar Khan-Chhor}

On 4th December 1971, the day had started at Rahim Yar Khan with an enemy air raid. At this time 3 Army Aviation Squadron Headquarters was located at Sahiwal Race Course Ground. One flight was at Rahim Yar Khan and six pilots with L-19s attached from Dhamial, were located at Multan, awaiting attachment to their affiliated formations.

Major Moaziz Hussain undertook the first operational sortie in an OH-13 helicopter to Dipalpur where he had gone to bring Major General Akram, General Officer Commanding 7 Division to Sahiwal. Major Javaid Hameed undertook second operational sortie of the day in an Alouette-III. He took the Corps Commander Lieutenant General Tikka Khan on a sortie to Pakpattan.

Lieutenant General “Mac” Remembers 18 Division Operations

Major Maqbool was the lone OH-13 pilot attached with the Division. He recalls in year 2003,

“On 3rd December 1971, I took Major General Mustafa on a reconnaissance mission. Next morning, I took off with the general for Gabbar, which was the launching pad. On the way back we saw echelons of vehicles stranded on the track and troops standing by, trying to pull out the vehicles. General was annoyed and directed me to get closer, general then waved his Peak-Cap in a circular motion {indicating troops to move forward} and troops responded.

On morning of 5th December I took the General from Goth Machi to Gabbar. General revealed that there was no communication link between the division and the advancing brigades, he asked me, “How far can you fly?” then said, “Can you go to Jaiselmair? I said, “It is out of endurance now, Sir. “He said, “Okay take me to Ramgarh, on our right side the track near Masitwali Bhit and Longanewala, the speed of troops was very slow. There were

tractors pulling the vehicles, we got closer to the track. I saw smoke in the distance and general asked me which was that place and I replied it is Jaiselmair, but general corrected me that it was Ramgarh. But it turned out to be Longanewala. These were own tanks on fire, we landed there {Longanewala}, General had a hasty and hot discussion with the brigade commanders. There was a casualty lying, an officer from Baloch Regiment. I put the casualty on the litter and then along with the General set course for Sadiqabad. General while in the helicopter asked for a paper which I did not have, so I gave him the wrapper of the cigarette packet, he wrote something and handed me over, with words to pass this back to the commanders at Longanewala. First we landed at the Main Dressing Station {MDS} at Dharki, dropped the casualty, got fuel and then dropped the general at Sadiqabad. I then flew back to the Longanewala, gave the message and further picked two more casualties on my OH-13 and landed back at Advance Dressing Station {ADS}. My flying for the day was 7 hours. Next day I again flew another five hours.

Missions were not specific in nature, I flew ammunition of all types, water, medicines, operational orders and evacuated casualties on OH-13 as well.. Few days later the command of the Division was changed and Major General Hameed took over; I flew him around for reconnaissance as well.

Major Maqbool was later awarded with Sitara-i- Basalat for his boldness and contributions to 18 Division's operations. He later rose to the rank of lieutenant general and commanded a Strike Corps apart from being the Commandant National Defence College before his retirement in 1998. Presently he is running a charity school in Lahore. "

Rahim Yar Khan On 5th December 1971, Headquarters 2 Corps informed 3 Army Aviation Squadron that two L-19s were required to undertake a surveillance mission to Islamgarh, in the Rahim Yar Khan- Khanpur area to assess the strenght and deployment of enemy forces which were operating in that area. Major Zafar Ullah Khan and Major Fahim Shah were detailed to fly the mission from Rahim Yar Khan. They took off at 1400 hours. Major Zafar {Colonel Retired} narrates, *"At around 1430 hours I got the orders for surveillance across the border to asses the enemy dispositions. I as a flight commander decided to undertake this mission my-self and told Major Fahim Shah to be stand-by for any other task from the formation. I flew at low level, following the lone track towards the border and soon had own troops in sight, they were bogged in sand. I flew looking for the enemy and after some time I could see them in the distance. I flew in a pattern where I was able to monitor the enemy in relative safety but soon I discarded that and dashed over the Indians hoping to get away before they could react. I was successful in my intelligence gathering but I had my share of the War when a burst of ground fire from the hostile troops ruptured the aircraft. It was getting late and slowly I realized that I would not be able to make it to the strip at Rahim Yar Khan for landing, by the time I reached overhead RahimYar Khan it was dark and I was unable to find the strip. I searched in near panic for any place to land but my instinct were the hindrance in taking such a suicidal step, later when my fuel was almost consumed, I was left with no other option but to land and I vainly followed a light and landed safely. It was the main road and to my good luck there was no traffic at that time."*

Major Zafar earned Tamgha-I- Jurat for his part in 1971 War. On promotion He commanded an Azad Kashmir Regiment. He later on returned to aviation, started the Tactical Courses in Aviation School. Presently he is settled in England, his two sons are flying in Army Aviation.

The Chhor Sector

Captain Iftikhar had only 50 odd hours on L-19 when in the last week of November 1971 he landed at Chhor Strip along with Major Fayyaz Ibrahim of 3 Squadron. He narrates, "Period prior to out break of war was utilized for area familiarization. On the eve of war we had shifted our location from Chhor to Dhoru Naro approximately 15 miles short of Chhor. Colonel Bashir was manning the skeleton divisional headquarters and on first day of war we were not given any mission. On the second day of war, I was to fly inside the Indian territory and to locate the Indian Armour. At dawn I took off and after 2 hours when I was coming back, I spotted Indian tanks on the move. I was flying low at Dhar level{ Dhar is flat hard ground in between sand dunes} and it was easy to pick up armour in desert due to immense dust raised by them.

As I was heading back with that information so vital for the defence of Chhor, I spotted hostile aircraft at one'o clock position to me, this was my first encounter with them. I froze on the controls and kept staring at the aircraft which was heading towards me. At mid range, he opened fire and I saw tracers whizzing past me, on getting closer, I had an eye contact with the pilot who would be my killer, his visor was up. All this took few seconds but I was perspiring. I thought that is how it goes and decided to look back at my stalker; he was turning, so I also decided to turn in the same direction. Now we both were circling and I discovered that he cannot get me if I remained in that pattern, soon he left me and I landed back.

It was our drill that after landing we would park the aircraft under the trees and placed sugar cane stack on the strip to hide it. Indian did bomb Chhor Strip and attacked railway station which was nearby but they never found our location.

An Aviator meets Two L-19 Accidents in a Day

On 7th December 1971 we had similar sorties; we both, myself and Major Fayyaz Ibrahim took off at dawn. Mine was an uneventful sortie and after 2 hours of flying, I landed back. Strip was vacant, after some time I realized that Major Fayyaz's aircraft was missing. I got worried and started ringing through field line to forward units and came to know of his being shot by the Indian aircraft. I was informed that he was alive and being transported back to Main Dressing Station on a railway engine. I got hold of the ambulance and rushed towards the railway station by the time I reached there, he had already arrived. His head was swollen and he was unable to talk. After first aid the doctor told me that he should be moved to Hyderabad. On road it would take 7 hours, so I got permission from Colonel Bashir for his evacuation by L-19 to Hyderabad.

By that time it was close to sunset. I put Major Fayyaz Ibrahim in the rear of L-19 in lying position and took off for Hyderabad. It was dark and the city was under total black out, over the bridge at Hyderabad I was fired upon from the ground and that's how I ascertained my position and aligned myself for landing. The phenomenon of Sea Breeze was too much for the aircraft or perhaps my inexperience accounted for that but I was unable to land. On my second attempt the aircraft was comfortably put on the parallel fields by the winds. On third attempt I landed but aircraft took a swing and broke its landing gears. Soon I got out and helped Major Fayyaz Ibrahim, soon ambulance also arrived.

It was a Civil Hospital and very soon doctors told me that Major Fayyaz had head injuries and should be evacuated to Karachi. I called Mauripur Base Commander who was helpful and promised that helicopter would take off at dawn for evacuation. It was getting close to the dawn when I informed Dhamial for the first time about this mishap and I was directed to proceed back to Chhor after evacuation.

Before the termination of war I went for a sortie, as I was over own forward defended localities, I saw own infantry withdrawing and heard an Artillery Junior Commissioned Officer, probably an observer, passing the observation to Captain Sarfraz of 11 Field Regiment. I came on air and confirmed it, I passed the correction. Since I did not have the appropriate map I told Captain. Sarfraz to fire two rounds in general direction so that I could give give correction from that reference; in that way I kept firing for over 2 hours in which I had the 'Uniform Target'. We stopped firing only when we thought it was enough and enemy had really suffered, which was evident from the fact that the positions remained intact till the cease fire.

Major Fayyaz Ibrahim Shaheed was awarded Sitara-I- Jurat and Captain Iftikhar later retired as major, was awarded s Tamgha-I- Jurat for their efforts in Chhor Sector.

Last Day of War

At 1230 hours on 16th December 1971, at Qila Soba Singh, an Emergency Air Request was made by Divisional Headquarters which was accepted as the enemy tanks had penetrated our positions. Captain Abid with Major Riaz got airborne at a short notice to conduct Forward Air Controller{FAC} mission. A trail of smoke was observed behind own aircraft but the pilots ignored that, in view of the importance of mission. Communication was established with own fighters and with the help of smoke round, target area was indicated to our Sabres. Our jets destroyed the target, in the meantime the L-19 engine had deteriorated considerably. Fumes entered the cockpit, leaving no choice to the pilot except to force land..

At 1530-1545 hours on 16th December 1971, probably the last sortie of the war in West was flown by Major Badar, when he took Alouette No. 1456 from Dhamial helipad to the dispersal area.

War Diaries and personal accounts of all aviators have one thing common on the last day. The sheer pain, anguish, frustration and deep sense of loss apart from betrayal. The loss and surrender was evident on each face, irrespective of the rank and service, with pain another vivid and clear determination was there on every face, the resolve for revenge.

Aviation Missions

During the period of open hostilities, quite a number of missions were executed proficiently in the West by the Army pilots. A total of 118 Battle Field Surveillance and Reconnaissance missions were conducted with positive results. Thirty two Artillery Shoots were taken and over a dozen times own jet fighters were guided on to the ground targets. Twenty six sorties were generated for Command and Liaison purpose. In addition six Search and Rescue and thirteen Casualty Evacuation missions were undertaken. Also twice Column-Control duties were performed and thrice Aerial Photography was done. This might not look an overbearing performance but remember no major offensive was launched except in Chamb, in other areas only small-scale efforts were undertaken for some minor gains..

C-130 operates From Dhamial

PAF Air Base Chaklala had been the main target of IAF initially and to avoid damage from their sneak raids own C-130 sorties were accommodated at Army Aviation Base Dhamial. The details of C-130 operations from Dhamial are as under:

6th December C-130# 143 Group Captain Choonara landed at 0851 hours and took off at 1120 hours.

9th December C-130 #Group Captain Choonara landed at 1642 hours and took off at 2159 hours.

10th December C-130# 140 Squadron Leader Sohail landed at 0915 hours and took off at 1441 hours.

10th December C-130 # 143 Squadron Leader Sohail landed at 1558 hours and had a night stay.

11th December C-130 # 143 Squadron Leader Sohail took off at 0548 hours.

11th December C-130# 491 Squadron Leader Sohail landed at 0930 hours and took off at 1157 hours.

11th December Call Sign Khalid 34 landed at 1822 hours and took off at 1845 hours.

12th December Call Sign Khalid 16 landed at 0013 hours on and took off at 0602 hours the same day.

13th December Call Sign Bais 19 landed at 0848 hours and took off at 1016 hours the same day as Call Sign Khalid 48.

Major Qasim - 4th January 1972

Major Muhammad Qasim was born on 1st October 1939 in Village Adina, District Mardan. He was commissioned in the Corps of Signals in October 1960. He attended Basic Flying Course P-6 in 1964 and was posted to 1 Army Aviation Squadron. He took active part in 1965 War and flew many operational sorties. In 1969 he qualified as Flying Instructor on

L-19 from Flying Instructor School, PAF Academy. Major Qasim served as instructor in Army Aviation School from 1969 to 1971, when in the last week of November he was attached with 2 Army Aviation Squadron.

It was early morning of 4th January 1972 when Major Muhammad Qasim took off from Gujranwala Strip (a flight of 2 Army Aviation Squadron had been moved to Gujranwala to support the operations of field formation). It was late in the afternoon when flight headquarters at Gujranwala received a telephone call from GSO-2, the caller wanted to talk to Major Qasim and apologized for not sending the vehicle at Satrah Strip where Major Qasim was to land. He was surprised when informed that Major Qasim had not returned, as according to him Major Qasim had left an hour ago.

It was then that the search for the missing aircraft started. All the inquiries revealed that Major Qasim last took off from Satrah for Gujranwala at 1200 hours on 4th January 1972, in L-19 (No-003) with 2nd Lieutenant Muhammad Humayun Raza, a Bengali officer of 24 Signal Battalion, on board. The air force agencies and the troops on the Forward Defended Localities were contacted but nothing was known except Major Qasim had taken off from Satrah. Soon after, the British Broad Casting{BBC} and the All India Radio confirmed the news of the hijacking and that Major Qasim has been shot dead and his body has been sent for postmortem.

It was revealed later, that when Major Qasim landed at Satrah, 2nd Lieutenant Humayun Raza contacted him and requested for a lift to Gujranwala. This Bengali officer had appeared for the aviation aptitude test before the war. Major Qasim in his usual helpful attitude and politeness promised to pick him up after he completes his mission. He however also advised him to get permission from the divisional headquarters for the airlift. After dropping the brigade commander in Pasrur, Major Qasim, on his way back landed at Satrah to pick up this officer, not knowing that the passenger had different plans and was going to be his assassin.

According to the team responsible for maintaining the strip, Major Qasim took off and then made a circuit as if to land back but went around on finals. This information and the position of the wounds after post mortem revealed that one bullet was fired at the right cheek which went through the left cheek and the second bullet was fired from the right ear which penetrated the brain. It indicates that 2nd Lieutenant Muhammad Humayun Raza probably had threatened Major Qasim to turn towards India soon after take off, but on refusal and seeing him attempting to land back, fired the first round. This first round was not fatal and Major Qasim still attempted to land back. This is also validated by the accounts of eye witnesses on ground, who described the aircraft banking and then straightening up. It is at this stage that Humayun fired the second fatal round. After shooting Major Qasim this officer knowing a bit of flying, flew towards India. A few words about the assassin. More than the so-called patriotism, assassin Raza wanted to avoid the punishment he was to receive from the divisional commander the following day for driving without license and over-running an old woman.

Major Qasim's body was received from India on 7th January 1972. Major Qasim was awarded Sitara-I-Jurat for the act of bravery and supreme sacrifice in an effort to uphold the

honour of his motherland. Later, Army Aviation Base Dhamial was named after Major Muhammad Qasim. It was to be known as Qasim Army Aviation Base.

Kayian, May 1972

Pakistan Army or more specific Tochi Scouts was holding onto an isolated post in Kayian Bowl amidst the Indian held area²⁰⁹. It was maintained through a track along Jinjar Nullah which the Indians held on sides, Indians or Major General D Souza thought that he can eliminate this post at will; he was in for a big surprise from Tochi scouts.

After the end of war in December 1971 the process of rebuilding a new Pakistan started, the very first political government to assume power through an election came to power, Mr.Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto initially had the powers of martial law administrator and president, later he only had the premier ship of the country. Bhutto and Mrs Indira Gandhi {Indian Premier} agreed to have a summit at Simla in July 1972, before that the boundary and land marks on ground especially in Kashmir {line of Control} had to be identified. From March 1972 onwards delineation talks between Pakistan Army and Indian counterpart initiated.

Kayian was a depression surrounded by high hills in Lipa, from three sides it was controlled physically, by observation and through fire the held Indian Army. Initially only a section of Tochi Scouts held that post. Since it was in the rear when war started thus Scouts were given the responsibility, it was only the setbacks in forward localities which made this post important. It had no value other than the psychological. It became a matter of pride for the Pakistan Army.

On the Indian side a controversy where both the brigade commander Brigadier Ghai and Major general E.D Souza both passed on the information earlier that Kayian Bowl is under their control now they tried to cover up by the earlier lie²¹⁰ by launching an attack on Kayian Bowl. Pakistan in the meanwhile had built up battalion strength with a company of Tochi Scouts within Kayian Bowl

In May 1972 the Indian attacked with two companies of 2 Guards to eliminate this post but there attacks failed and foiled by Tochi Scouts. Another attack was launched with 9th Sikhs it also felt back²¹¹. 16 Tochi Scouts embraced shahadat in the month of May alone. Sepoy Sharif Khan, Wali Subhan and Amir Khajan died due to mine blast, Sepoy Noor Zaman, Muhammad Sarwar, Mahsood Gul were hit by enemy rockets. Lance Naik AqalMarjan Tori was newly married he was killed by a sniper. Lance Naik Luqman, Umar Hayat, and Sepoy Khan Bahadur, Amin Shah & Sharif Khan embraced shahadat while launching a local counter attack, Sepoy Noor Islam died in hand to hand battle, Abdul Jabbar died while rescuing him, Sepoy Juma Khan died with a hand grenade which he exploded

²⁰⁹ Mohan Bhandari, Lieutenant General, *Solving Kashmir*{Lancer, New Delhi, 2006}, p - 80

²¹⁰ Sukhwant Singh Major General *India's War Since Independence* { Lancer, New Delhi, 2009}.p. 228

²¹¹ Shankar Prasad *the Gallant Dogras; an Illustrated History of the Dogra Regiment*, {Dogra Regimental Centre, 2005} p, 359. Also see Hamoodur Rehman Commission Report {Pakistan Official Document} p - 212.

while jumping onto an enemy. Their sacrifices were not wasted the post was held and Indian attacks foiled. Lipa remains the Silver Lining of Tochi Scouts.

Sepoy Qat Ali Khan was blessed with son few days ago, he died due to artillery splinters in July 1972.

Chak Mukam – 1972

The village of Chak Mukam was across the Neelum River within small arms fire range of Pakistani post; it on the other hand, located at the extreme edge of the Indian posts, nearest was ‘Amar Singh Ki Tekri’ almost five hours of marching. Located at the tip of ‘Sari’ ridge line, taking off from Nastachum Pass {Indian soldiers called it Sadhna Pass after an Indian actress}, moving south east over the Samshabari Range as part of a spur, jutting out of the Nagian some eight – ten kilometres amidst Indian Posts like Ghasla Top, Brown Patch, Left Shoulder, Ring Contour, and finally Amar Singh Tekri

From June 1972 onwards the Indians started probing and influencing the village with a view to include it within their side of the Line of Control. They made two concentrated and determined attacks in last week of July but failed both times. Tochi Scouts were holding the isolated post ‘Nagina’ overlooking the Village ‘Two patrols had miserably failed due to heavy firing from Lugrian post of Pakistan across the Neelum River just opposite Village Chak Mukam’²¹². It was a period of intense ‘Gasht’ and ‘Chapao’.

Tochi Scouts contingent was now deployed for over a year, leave was given on rotation and men were also rotated from other wings which were stationed at MiranShah. Commandant visited the contingent twice and so did the second in command and other staff officers. The only requirement not fulfilled by the regular army was lack of ‘Niswar’. It was the duty of the subedar major to provide the finest quality of Niswar, which he did. On 7th October 1972, a small post of scouts came under attack; it was an Indian Patrol which had sneaked in. Few men at the post instantly took the positions and chased the Patrol, Bahishtis Masri Khan was in the forefront of this assault and he received the first bullets as well. Lance Naik Waris Khan ably handled the situation and died while firing on the enemy. Sepoy Dost Muhammad was the driver who hit a mine.

In November Sepoy Muhammad Ali Khan was hit fatally by a splinter and in the last week Naik Kach Kul was wounded fatally while on a night duty, Naik Hakim Khan was the last casualty of 1971 War when on 9th December 1972, he was hit on the chest by a bullet while he having a round of the area.

Simla Agreement

Simla Agreement was signed on 2nd July 1972 at 1240 Hours; India was to vacate over 10,000 square kilometres of Pakistan territory while Pakistan would continue occupying

²¹² Captain Rajindir Singh, 8th Rajputana Rifles account, www.suleikha.com accessed 15th July 2012.

the 600 square kilometres of Indian Territory in Kashmir. Pakistan did not have to pay for any war damages also. The Cease Fire Line of 1948 was replaced with Line of Control.²¹³

Agreement

1. The Government of India and the Government of Pakistan are resolved that the two countries put an end to the conflict and confrontation that have hitherto marred their relations and work for the promotion of a friendly and harmonious relationship and the establishment of durable peace in the subcontinent, so that both countries may henceforth devote their resources and energies to the pressing task of advancing the welfare of their peoples. In order to achieve this objective, the Government of India and the Government of Pakistan have agreed as follows:

(i) That the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations shall govern the relations between the two countries;

(ii) That the two countries are resolved to settle their differences by peaceful means through bilateral negotiations or by any other peaceful means mutually agreed upon between them. Pending the final settlement of any of the problems between the two countries, neither side shall unilaterally alter the situation and both shall prevent the organization, assistance or encouragement of any acts detrimental to the maintenance of peaceful and harmonious relations;

(iii) That the prerequisite for reconciliation, good neighborliness and durable peace between them is a commitment by both the countries to peaceful coexistence, respect for each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty and non-interference in each other's internal affairs, on the basis of equality and mutual benefit;

(iv) That the basic issues and causes of conflict which have bedeviled the relations between the two countries for the last 25 years shall be resolved by peaceful means;

(v) That there shall always respect each other's national unity, territorial integrity, political independence and sovereign equality;

(vi) That in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations they will refrain from the threat of use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of each other.

2. Both Governments will take steps within their power to prevent hostile propaganda directed against each other. Both countries will encourage the dissemination of such information as would promote the development of friendly relations between them.

3. In order progressively to restore and normalize relations between the two countries step by step, it was agreed that:

(i) Steps shall be taken to resume communications, postal, telegraphic, sea, land including border posts, and air links including overflights.

(ii) Appropriate steps shall be taken to promote travel facilities for the nationals of the other country.

²¹³ Simla Agreement, 1972.

(iii) Trade and cooperation in economic and other agreed fields will be resumed as far as possible.

(iv) Exchange in the fields of science and culture will be promoted. In this connection delegations from the two countries will meet from time to time to work out the necessary details.

4. In order to initiate the process of establishment of durable peace, both the Governments agree that:

(i) Indian and Pakistani forces shall be withdrawn to their side of the international border.

(ii) In Jammu and Kashmir, the line of control resulting from the cease-fire of December 17, 1971 shall be respected by both sides without prejudice to the recognized position of either side. Neither side shall seek to alter it unilaterally, irrespective of mutual differences and legal interpretations. Both sides further undertake to refrain from the threat or the use of force in violation of this Line.

(iii) The withdrawals shall commence upon entry into force of this Agreement and shall be completed within a period of 30 days thereof.

5. This Agreement will be subject to ratification by both countries in accordance with their respective constitutional procedures and will come into force with effect from the date on which the Instruments of ratification are exchanged.

6. Both Governments agree that their respective Heads will meet again at a mutually convenient time in the future and that, in the meanwhile, the representatives of the two sides will meet to discuss further the modalities and arrangements for the establishment of durable peace and normalization of relations, including the questions of repatriation of prisoners of war and civilian interests, a final settlement of Jammu and Kashmir and the resumption of diplomatic relations.

(Indira Gandhi)

Prime Minister

Republic of India

(Zulfikar Ali Bhutto)

President

Islamic Republic of Pakistan

Simla, the 2nd July, 1972²¹⁴

In 1977 a military coup brought General Zia Ul Haq into power, Zia faced multiple challenges, he promptly hanged Bhutto through a court coup in 1979 and imposed martial law. In the meantime Russian

²¹⁴ Paul Bowers, Parliamentary papers of Britain, paper on Kashmir 04/28, 30th March 2004.

invaded Afghanistan and also a minor issue in northern areas of Pakistan erupted into a three decade long military campaign which is still going on

SIACHEN GLACIER

In over 4000 years of military history man has fought valiantly at strange places and for strange causes but never before till 1983 he has fought at such dizzy heights and low temperatures as Pakistan and India clashed over Siachen glacier, the world's largest glacier measuring 70 KM in length with width of 4-8 Kilometres. World second highest peak mount Godwin Austin K-2 is located in the same region along with other 4 peaks over 8000 meters ,there are more than 100 peaks over 7000 meters scattered in the area. Great Indian sub-continent which is the seat of Indus civilization, the very civilization is over 5000 years old ,the life line of this civilization is river Indus which has its water shed in the same region {Lake Mansowar}the other great river of subcontinent river Ganges also has its source in Simla located in great Himalayan range. There are three great mountain ranges in the world namely Himalaya, Hindu Kush and Karakorum, these ranges have bounded Indian subcontinent from north and west, near Gilgit these three ranges meet at one point. Himalaya runs north westerly direction like a spinal cord running along the body, Kashmir ,Nepal and Burma are located on this range, it forms the natural barrier towards north against China, Mount Everest and Nanga Parbat "the killer mountain" are part of this range .Hindukush runs in Easterly direction and forms the Eastern flank of subcontinent before it merges into the Arabian sea it divides Afghanistan and Persia from subcontinent, most of the foreign invaders have adopted this route in the past to invade subcontinent Alexander, Mongols, Taimour and Mughals all came from the passes through this range.

KARAKORUM is the majestic of all the other two ranges it is smallest in area occupying only two square degrees on the million map but concentration of high, barren, wild, glaciated void of any living being exception being wild roses that too not beyond 15000 feet peaks are more than at any other part of the world, it is the apex of world ,Marco polo was wrong when he tagged Central Asia as the roof of the world but that was maximum which man has ventured till 13 century. These mountains were there since the time immortal although geologist do debate that nature has gone through fundamental changes over period of time ,the very glaciers and mountains which we see today as barren hell may have been a green pasture few centuries back. The local folk legend also talk of a village at the foothills of K-2 and of royal hunting ground at Chogolisa . Khunjerab pass in the Karakorum is the only passable way through which highlanders from Central Asia could descend down to the plains of Indus river after negotiating thousand kilometres long Indus valley, other alternate passes or la as the local calls them are so remote, high, narrow and cold that it requires something of Hanniball crossing Alps with the elephants. Before the advent of John's Company no one in India was aware of these fabulous mountains in the North. By 1810 when India was under British Raj, River Sutlej was the boundary between Sikh empire and the Viceroy. Ranjit

Singh the one eyed lion of Punjab had firm control over the Kashmir which was the gateway to the Karakorum ranges. Britishers were anxious to explore the hidden heaven and thanks to diplomacy of horses, wine and women the three only weaknesses of Maharaja Ranjit Singh ,many of legendry adventurers like Savoy, Vigne, Moorcraft, Burnes, Young husband, Joseph wolff, Baron carl von Hugel, and many others were able to explored the area and this is how modern world came to know about these ranges and the passes which interconnect varying valleys and finally leading to the Pamirs ,Takhlaman desert and Central Asia . In 1851 survey of India carried out trigonometric triangulation of subcontinent during which Mount Everest was declared as the highest mountain in the world similarly K-2 was also spotted in this time. apart from exploration British had one major concern regarding Russians invading subcontinent through the passes leading from Pamir towards Karakorum a chess board like tussle started between the two powers which Kipling termed as the Great Game. By the end of 19 century

British had Gilgit and surrounding areas like Hunza and Chitral under their control with a resident looking after the affairs. Algernon Durand was one such resident whose elder brother Mortimer Durand in 1896 drew the famous Durand line the boundary between India and Afghanistan. In 1912 another explorer by the name of Fanny Bullock and her husband Wiliam while exploring Karakorum carried out first survey of Siachen glacier. Glaciers are thick flat grounds of ice which provides excellent skiing arena however they are full of dangers and hazard like sea ,beneath flat ground are crevices ,moraines, falls, pinnacles ,false ice bridges ,there are two ways to traverse it either move on it or walk at the edges where there is a sudden and surprise barrage of stones from the adjoining rocks in summer and avalanches in the winter . Couple wrote elaborate details about Siachin the biggest glacier outside polar world, which provides a link to move from Central Asia towards Skardu and Nubra valley and then down the vale of Kashmir to the plains of Punjab and Sind.williams were not the first one to discover possible route from china to India ,in 1892 Conway Saddle had already crossed the karakorum from karakorum pass and than via Conway saddle traversed baltoro glacier before reaching Skardu .

In 1948 a cease fire was agreed upon which drew a Line of Control {LOC}from Chenab river towards North in a curving fashion amounting to 430 kilometers uptill point NJ 9842 which is short of Chinese border .At that time no man has ventured there thus both countries agreed on a common statement defining border in thisremote area “Thence North to the Glaciers”. In 1954 K-2 was first surmounted by the Italians they went through Pakistan so did many other expeditions for other peaks in Karakorum range. In subsequent two wars fought in the region bitter fighting took place along LOC but no ventures were undertaken beyond NJ9842 for the very reason that it seemed impossible.

Siachen Glacier

Glacier lies between the Great Karakoram Range and Saltoro Range. It runs parallel to the Saltoro range from North East to South West. Its mouth contains three important mountain passes. To the east is Siala, which ultimately leads to Chaplet and to its North East lies two passes namely Indrakoli pass(19,360ft) and Turkistan La (18,520 ft) both the passes

leading to Chinese territory. On the Eastern side of Siachen Glacier lies the famous Teram Kangri group. Teram Shehr group and the North Terong group. Total length of the Siachen Glacier is about 72 KM and it terminates into NUBRA River in Indian Territory. Its width varies between 3 and 4 KM and is almost completely covered with snow except 2 to 3 lanes of blackish stones running along its western edge from the point where Lolofond Glacier joins it, till it terminates in NUBRA

Beginning of the Conflict-1977

It was in 1977 that a German rafter intending to undertake the first descent of Nubra River from its origin that is Siachin Glacier, approached the famous Indian mountaineer Colonel Narinder Kumar, of Indian Army. The German had a 1967 American printed map of the area which showed the Siachin as part of the Pakistan. Narinder took these details to Lieutenant General Chibber, of Indian Military Operations, who gave permission to Narinder for launching of an expedition. Colonel Narinder later took a 70 members team and reached mid point of Siachin Glacier. He also climbed 24297 feet Teram Kangri. During this expedition Indians discovered Pakistani cigarette packs which were taken back and showed to Chibber as proof of Pakistani intrusion. In 1981 Kumar went back to the Siachin and completed a snout to source survey of the glacier apart from ascent to the Sia Kangri, he also skied down the glacier and later wrote all this in 'Weekly Illustrated India' magazine. He wrote "There was not a soul there, there was so much to climb, the view from Sia Kangri looking down on the Siachin Glacier is so beautiful just like a great white snake.... going, going, going, I have never seen anything so white and so wide".

Pakistan's Response -1981

This Indian venture did not go unnoticed, there were reports and rumours circulating in the Skardu of Indian adventure. On 17th August 1981 Skardu Superintendent of Police, Mr Ali Ahmed Jan reported about 15 Indian soldiers in Chumik and Chulling area. He later searched the area between 26th August -6th September 1981 but to no avail. In the early summer of 1982 there were reports of Indians again in the area with rumours of their raping four Balti womenfolk

Enters Army Aviation –

Pakistan Military Operation Directorate however decided to probe this more seriously and asked Army Aviation to dispatch one helicopter in the area. The aim was to show physical activity and observe any Indian presence. It was later in the day on 24th August 1982 that a sortie was received by 5 Army Aviation Squadron, Dhamial, to send a helicopter next morning to Skardu

Major Azam was sitting in the crew room when he got the message for the sortie to be undertaken. He recalls that historical sortie *'Our Squadron was already employed in the northern areas and I, like many other pilots had fair experience of mountain flying in the area. My co-pilot was Captain Sami. On receipt of the mission the usual procedures started like collecting weather details, fuel, overnight kit and sorting out few domestic chores in the*

short time available. The flight to Pattan and then to Gilgit was usual. In our jargon if you landed safely that means everything is okay. At Gilgit we met our squadron officers and talked to them about this mission into unknown valleys, so little did we realize at the time that it actually is the beginning of a long and hazardous adventure. Next day on 26th August 1982, we flew in Alouette No. 1457 to Skardu where we met Brigade Major 62 Brigade, Major Hamid Nawaz {later rose to Secretary Defence} who briefed us on the motives of the sortie. It was basically an aerial reconnaissance cum confirmatory mission which was to be taken on 27th August 1982. Whole day was spent in co-ordination like collecting of suitable maps, making sketches, placing of the fuel at Khaplu, from where we started our mission”.

Thus the saga of Army Aviation at Siachen started on 27th August 1982 which till to date remains the high mark of aviation support to field formations in which Army Aviation proved not only their flying skills but above all displayed an extraordinary attitude of commitment and dedication to see their brethren in arms deployed in an inhospitable terrain. Major Azam remembers the events of that day and narrates.

“When we reached Goma we again refuelled the helicopter and took off for the historic sortie about which none of us could have predicted at that time. We flew in two sectors on that day totalling over three hours of flying, we flew towards the passes and adjoining heights looking for Indian troops which were not there. It was windy and helicopter was difficult to control at such heights, we did not venture over the passes although we tried to fly over them but controls became sluggish, It was my first sortie in this particular area, the excitement of flying over a new territory has its own charm and challenge. I had just finished reading ‘The Great Game’ and while flying I could not resist paying homage to the pioneer travelers who ventured through these un-chartered passes in search of adventure fuelled with the pioneering spirit.”

‘Next day we undertook mission in Khaplu Sector and flew towards Baltoro Glacier, looking for the intruders, meanwhile Major Hamid Nawaz made his own notes about the area. I still remember that people on ground would run and take cover on hearing the helicopter noise. At refueling many of locals admitted coming from far distance to see the helicopter, it was the first time that local inhabitants had seen helicopter. The major findings of the sortie were”.

Routes-There are two major routes available from Khaplu to Siachen Glacier, The important features on the first route are Khaplu – Dansum – Kurma Ding – Kondus – Kondus Glacier – Siala (17,100 feet) – Siachen Glacier. The flying distance of this route is about 145 Kilometres and 2/3rd is covered by Kondus and Siachen Glaciers. The last place of habitation on this route is Kurma Ding and no vegetation is available beyond this place. Second route is from Khaplu – Dansum – Goma – Gyari – Bilafond Glacier – Ali Brangsa – Bilafond La (17,000 ft) – Lolofond Glacier – Siachen Glacier. The flying distance of this route is about 110 Kilometres and 3/5th is covered by Bilafond, Lolofond and Siachen Glaciers. The last place of habitation on this route is Goma.

Weather. In this area weather is quite unpredictable, but the valleys normally remain open as the clouds usually cling to the mountains on either sides.

That was the first ever sortie to be undertaken for Siachin, the crew came back next day to Dhamial and for coming days narrated the sortie in crew room as high mark of their mountain flying.

First Pakistan Army Expedition- 1983

Sequel to the First sortie it was decided to despatch a ground expedition "Ababeel" as show of force on the glacier. Early part of 1983 was used for planning and in July –August 1983 one Special Services Group {SSG} Company ex 1st Commando Battalion was sent to the area. An Alouette helicopter along with two pilots ie Major Naqvi and Captain Shabab were also dispatched from Dhamial to Khaplu via Gilgit. At Gilgit Major Naqvi was replaced by Major Shoukat Masood. The Special Services Group Company was placed under command Major Aslam with Captain Arshad Rafiq as the second in command with Captain Doctor Aftab as the medical officer. This commando expedition was supported administratively by the lone Alouette helicopter operating from Khaplu. The Special Services Group strength was approximately 70 all ranks. Two Puma helicopters also took part in the operation when they helilifted this company from Khaplu towards Sia La in successive sorties. This expedition being the pioneer was handicapped by lack of high altitude equipment such as boots and tents. All their rations were placed on two sledges and unfortunately one oil Jerri-can leaked and soaked all the ration less tea.

On 31st July 1983 Major Naqvi and Captain Shabab dropped fuel and other edibles at Sia La while hovering. This was the highest hovering at that time under taken by Army Aviation. As the expedition moved forward, progressively their administrative demands increased. Whole expedition which was now divided into three groups, one was tasked to move forward and the other two platoons started supporting this move.

Indians Detection 16th August-1983

Indians were present on the Siachin and were just few Kilometers ahead of own post but both were unaware of each other's presence. On 16th August 1983, Major Shoukat Masood and Captain Shabab were on a re-supply mission with Lieutenant Colonel Munir the commanding officer of the SSG battalion. Supplies were dropped at Camp No. 4, the new forward location of the expedition. After dropping the loads the pilots flew forward out of curiosity towards the Nubra River. In general area around HJ 9995, Captain Shabab spotted two men walking on the stone lane, another person was detected by Major Shoukat Masood in area NK 0194. He was standing near a trench and on seeing the helicopter jumped into the trench. On the return flight the aviators flew straight towards Gilgit and informed Commander Force Command Northern Area {FCNA} about this latest situation.

Special Services Group had established five camps on the glacier and in next few days Alouette flew extensively in the area to observe the Indians but now the pilots were cautious about the Indians as they had seen their Ack Ack machine guns. Despite all this, own pilots were able to detect a number of enemy posts with proper helipads. On 21st August

1983, Brigadier Tariq Mahmood{TM} was also flown in the area and it was revealed that Indians had vacated their camps. Further Alouette sorties confirmed that Indians had ventured as far as Bila Fond La and had prepared small posts in the stony part of the glacier.

Landing on Vacated Indian Post 23rd August 1983

Early morning both pilots Captain Shabab and Major Shoukat took Commander SSG, Brigadier TM along with the commanding officer of the battalion to Piun, the eastern extreme edge of the Siachin Glacier where the passengers were dropped and Alouette flew back bringing back one own frost bite casualty from Camp 5. At 1430 hours Commander FCNA Major General Pir Dad Khan and Brigadier TM were flown over the glacier and were shown the vacated Indian camps. They also landed at the forward enemy camp which was already secured by own troops. Pakistan launched protest to United Nations{UN} and on 24th August 1983 two United Nations Observers along with Brigadier TM were flown by own pilots including Major Azam and Captain Shabab followed by Commander 62 Brigade in another helicopter being flown by Major Naqvi and Major Shoukat Masood

Vacation of Siachin by Pakistani troops. By end of August 1983, the weather started getting worse and chilly with snow fall being experienced at night. Commander FCNA ordered the expedition to withdraw. Aviation flew last sortie on Alouette III helicopter on 27th August 1983 by, Major Masood and Captain Shabab

Plan For The Future

Immediately after the withdrawal of own troops from Siachin by end of August 1983 Military Operation Directorate{MO}, Headquarters 10 Corps and Commander FCNA got busy in evolving future course of action. In this situation following conclusions were drawn. Firstly Indians would pre-empt own occupation of the glacier. Secondly they will come in bigger force to rule out the stepping back on seeing Pakistani troops. Further analysis led to believe that only the passes allow Indian Force to step onto the habitat from glacier and vice versa. Holding of these passes by Pakistani troops can effectively seal the fate of any conflict, thus passes became vital. Finally, own forces needed special equipment to operate in such hostile terrain.

A meeting was held on 8th October 1983, in GHQ, presided by the President General Zia Ul Haq which reviewed the whole situation²¹⁵. It was decided to prepare well for the next year's venture, also support of own air force in logistic supply of the troops was probed. It was also directed that no effort and expense be spared for this venture and subsequently orders were placed for special snow equipment

Race for the Passes- 1984

²¹⁵ Military Operations secret letter dated...

Both the adversaries prepared hard for the campaigning season of 1984. On Pakistani side the two major towns of Gilgit and Skardu were experiencing hectic activities. There was a marked increase in the troops movement. Higher Headquarters had prepared well by buying latest equipment for this purpose. Shops in twin cities were selling all kinds of equipment mostly the left overs of foreign expeditions. In early April 1984 the joint expedition of Special Services Group and Northern Light Infantry {NLI} whose troops are all locals thus more sturdy and hardy than their plain counterparts, had concentrated at Khaplu. Following resources were allotted and earmarked for this purpose which included Head Quarters 62 Brigade, two SSG Companies, one NLI battalion, two Pumas and three Alouette helicopters

Before the Pakistani troops climb the passes that would ensure their control over the glacier Brigadier Ghulam Mohammad Director General Military Operations and Brigadier Ajmal Commander of 62 Brigade planned an aerial reconnaissance to iron out last minute details. On 17th April 1984, two Alouette helicopters flown by Lieutenant Colonel Kamal Khan the Commanding Officer of 5 Squadron along with Captain Shabab as co-pilot and second helicopter had Major Farooq Altaf and Captain Jamshed Bajwa. These two helicopters made a plan, to enter Siachin from Sia La after flying over the glacier; planned to return via Bilafond La-Gyari-Goma and back to Khaplu. On reaching Sia La, Major Farooq noticed some troops on the pass and he talked to the lead helicopter, which also noticed the troops at another camp. They decided to return back after making low passes over the camps. The lead helicopter of Lieutenant Colonel Kamal Khan returned back to Dansum whereas the wing-man followed the original itinerary and found more Indian troops at Bilafond La as well. It was thus clear that Indians had reacted more quickly and were able to reach the passes before Pakistani troops. Furthermore Major Farooq's helicopter on landing was inspected as per procedures, few bullet holes were observed at the tail. These were the first shots fired by the enemy in Siachin Glacier. DGMO rushed back to the GHQ and informed the higher ups about this new development. It was decided to push ahead own troops as far forward as possible and occupy the heights opposite the Indians. FCNA acted on its contingency No. 2 which was hatched for such a catastrophe, which envisaged occupation and defending the next line of defences. Composite SSG Platoon was sent to occupy defensive position in general area Kundus Bend in Sia La sector. One Composite Company of SSG in Ali Brangsa was deployed to check enemy in Bila Fond sector. One Composite Platoon at Gyong and one Platoon of NLI was to defend area in Chulung. Gyong La was occupied by the SSG on 15th May 1984 and exchange of fire in same sector took place on 25th May 1984.

The Line Of Contact

By end May 1984, Indians had occupied all the possible passes leading to Siachin Glacier from Pakistan or China.

Indian Dispositions

Sia La. Kilo Company of Laddakh Scouts at pass{post}, Company minus in depth{camp] and a Platoon at Indira Koli {post]

BilaFond La. Two companies of 4th Kumaon Regiment were at the pass. Gyong La. Two companies of 9th Kumaon located at Dzingrulma.

Pakistani Deployment

Ali Brangsa. SSG Company ex 1st Commando supported by Section 120 mm Mortars, 105mm Howitzer and Section 81 mm Mortars {later 21st Azad Kashmir Regiment came in winter}

Gyong La. Company SSG supported by Section 120 mm Mortars, 105 mm Howitzer and section 81 mm Mortars

Yarma La {Layogma} Platoon SSG which was supplemented by another Platoon supported by One 105 mm Howitzer and 81 mm Mortars

Chulung La One company of 1st NLI supported by Section 3 inch Mortars

Kundus Bend Platoon 1 NLI supported by Two- 81 mm Mortars.

Goma Battalion HQ of 1st Commando and 1st NLI Battalion

Dansum Tactical Head Quarters of 62 Brigade. On 16th November 1984 323rd Brigade took over the responsibility.

Exercise Yarmuk

Since 323 Brigade was totally committed in “Exercise Ababeel” which was looking after the passes and as the other traditional approach towards Skardu from Siachin Glacier, emanate through Shigar valley, thus 62 Brigade was tasked to send troops to occupy Conway Saddle, this exercise was code named “Yarmuk”

Indians Also Reach Saddle

By the end of January 1985 troops consisting of Infantry battalion and commando platoon were concentrated at Skardu, this force was called “Zarrar Company”. Reconnaissance for Baltoro Glacier started in February 1985. On 3rd March 1985, one officer and four Jawans were heli lifted by Lieutenant Colonel Kamal and Major Khalid of 5 Squadron and dropped at the base of Conway Saddle. On 17th April 1985 the post at Conway Saddle was established, coincidentally Indians also reached the Saddle same day and occupied the forward edge known as Forward Saddle.

Flying Across Conway Saddle

First ever crossing from Baltoro to Kundus over Conway Saddle was made by Major Khalid Salim and Captain Ifzaal on 6th May 1985. Second time it was done on 20th May 1985 by Major Khalid Salim and Captain Inam Karim with Captain Rashid following in another helicopter, Commander FCNA was on board in both the sorties. On 22nd May 1985 Major

Khalid Salim and Captain Inam Karim landed at Conway Saddle with Commander FCNA. This was the first ever landing at Conway Saddle. The highest ever military post {20,000 feet} in the world

Aviation Logistic Plan

Aviation played an important role in providing not only the logistic support to the out posts but also in aerial observation and gathering of intelligence. Ground movement would normally take 7-10 days for any commander to see the area, however it took under an hour of flying to have a birds eye view of the entire area.

In the early days the troops despite all precautions and preparations were still not geared for the extreme winter hazards of the area thus bulk of casualties were weather related including frost-bite and pulmonary oedema {water filling up in lungs} both requiring immediate evacuation to lower altitudes. It was Army Aviation which despite all technical odds rose to the occasion and after GOD were the only hope of troops survival. Army Aviation had Alouettes of 5 Squadron and Puma helicopters {One Puma was permanently placed at Gilgit} to carry out aerial dumping of the rations and casualty evacuation. Director Army Aviation in the initial presentations pointed out that two Pumas can effectively provide logistic support to a company strength at an altitude of 5000 meters, provided these Pumas are fitted with high altitude kits. In the absence of such kits, Pumas can only operate till 4000 meters, from where upward Alouette helicopters would be employed. The troops for operations Exercise Yarmuk were supplied on weekly basis, as follows:-

From Skardu to Gore- Puma. helicopter

From Gore onward – Alouette helicopter

It was also pointed out that para dropping of supplies could not be done from helicopter because the equipment packed by air despatch unit was meant for C-130 aircraft only. The pellets were of large sizes and could not be used in helicopter. Helicopter could deliver the loads by dropping or landing. However, the load carrying capacity of Puma (700 Kg) and Alouette (120 Kg) was restricted and the total amount to be lifted in a year was 1,08,984 lbs. Therefore, to undertake all supplies by helicopters was too demanding. In comparison 14,000 lbs could be carried in a single C-130 sortie. The problems foreseen by PAF was the suitability of the area for safe para/free drop operations and availability of manoeuvring space.

5 Squadron Gears up for Siachin

5 Squadron pilots flying the Alouette-3 helicopter had fair amount of experience in mountain flying. They were supporting the Frontier Works Organisation at Gilgit and Chitral, but they had seldom operated over the glaciated terrain especially in winters. Thus new procedures and techniques were adopted for this purpose. As a thumb rule the senior pilots would fly on to any new post and then they would clear the junior pilots for independent missions after requisite checkouts. In the same time period, many experienced pilots were

posted out for the conversion on Cobra helicopters thus the pilots shortage became a serious issue which was tackled by having more students in Rotary courses and their further conversion on Alouette helicopter for high altitude operations.

5 Squadron was raised on 6th January 1971 for providing heavy and utility rotary support to Frontier Works organization. FWO purchased three Alouette and three MI-8 helicopters. Later three more Alouette and Two Jet Rangers were also purchased from FWO funds. In 1996 when the KKH project was completed the 5 Squadron was put into suspended animation. It was re-raised later in 1999.

25 Aviation Squadron

Digest of Service records “Squadron took part in Exercise Ababeel which started in April 1984. Beside operational environment, the area was most hazardous and full of all types of weather phenomenons. The pilots met the challenges with complete devotion and dedication to accomplish their assigned tasks. A total of 640.05 hours were generated with 39,125 kg of cargo consisting of weapons, ammunition, guns, mortars and special equipment for snow bound area carried without any minor occurrence”. Digest of Service further records” Between January-March 1985, dumping of equipment and stores to a tune of 84,000 kilogram was done by Captain Ehsan Qadir Khan and Captain Sayed Ali during their tenure. Running drops of ammunition and critical supplies were provided at an altitude of 4800 meters. The co-operation to own troops was extended for the first time in Baltoro Glacier area {Exercise Yarmuk}”. All the operations in this area were based upon Aviation effort. Initially dumping was carried at Paiju. Aerial reconnaissance was also done uptill 5000 meters which is the maximum service ceiling of Puma helicopters”.

Mapping of The Glacier

No reliable maps of the area were available and again Army Aviation through its Turbo Jet aircraft was able to carry out the entire mapping of the glacier. Lieutenant Colonel Minhaj of VVIP Flight narrates” One day I was called by Brigadier Mokeet, Director Aviation who took me to the Chief of General Staff {CGS} where the requirement was given to me. An earlier attempt was made by the PAF but it did not meet the army requirement. CGS decided to use proper mapping equipment of Survey of Pakistan. We immediately got busy in detailed planning and started the task. I would take-off from Dhamial and then climb to 29000 feet, there was one helicopter stand by at Skardu for Search & Rescue. A total of 17 sorties were flown and the task was completed”.

Enters Lama

Alouettes were inducted primarily to support the Karakorum Highway construction and was the only helicopter of Pakistan Army which was capable of operating and supporting troops at such altitudes. Puma & MI-8 helicopters were not suitable for any operation above 4000 Meters. Taking lead from the Indians who had a big fleet of Lamas { It was this very

helicopter which had facilitated the Indians in reaching the passes earlier}.Pakistan Army also decided to induct these helicopters on its inventory for exclusive employment in the Siachin Glacier. Lieutenant General Zahid Ali Akbar was Commander of 10 Corps he helped Army Aviation to obtain GHQ's approval for induction of Lama helicopters.

First Batch of Lama Pilots Trained in France-1986

Six pilots were selected in December 1985 to proceed to France for training and conversion.They flew eight-ten hours each.They were.

Major Asghar Abbas Naqvi

Captain Inam Karim “

Captain Muhammad Ahmed Raashid ‘

Captain Muhammad Ifzal ‘

Major Shoaib Awan

Major Javed Ahmed

Arrival of Lama Helicopter-1986

The first batch of four Lama helicopters was air lifted by C-130 from France to Chaklala Air-Base in April 1986 and two more were flown in May same year.The very first accident of the Lamas occurred while being transported from the Chaklala to Qasim Base in a tank-transporter when the driver applied harsh brakes to save a bicyclist resulting in the two Lamas {No.2673 & 2678}having broken canopies

Lama Flight and The Famous Lama House

A flight of 8 Squadron moved to Skardu (Gamba) which is now popularly known as Lama Flight in whole of the 10 Corps. The helicopters were placed at Gamba strip and pilots were housed at Skardu, in a private accomodation hired by the squadron.There was another house which 8 Squadron had hired later for the married officers who would bring their families with them for the tenure.These two houses were famous in whole Skardu as “Lama House”.Years later when flight was moved back to Qasim Base the owner politely refused to rent it again because of his attachment with the Lama Flight. The Lama Flight comprised of 6-8 pilots at all times under a flight commander.Officers strength would be increased as and when operational situation warranted. The pilots had to stay for 30-45 days of tenure at Skardu in rotation and average flying per day used to be 4-6 hours. At time the pilots had to fly 8-10 hours per day due to operational requirement.

Puma Flight

Apart from the Lama Flight at Skardu the FCNA had one Puma Flight at Gilgit as well. The Puma pilots also came on rotation from 21, 24 and 25 Squadrons stationed at Qasim and Multan Bases. Puma would operate from Gilgit to Skardu and then onwards carry out the dumping in forward areas falling back to Gilgit in the evening. In extreme cases due to the weather and other unforeseen hazards they would have a night stay at Skardu. This flight also had similar accommodation at Gilgit where arrangements were made for the families as well.

Air Operations in Northern Areas[Extract from No.6 PAF Squadron History]

During this time, since Pak Army's artillery had difficulty in communication with each other and with various command posts due to the terrain effect, C-130s were used as relay stations. At sunrise the first C-130 would be in position near K-2 for a six hour sortie where it would fly a racetrack pattern, provide communication link, apart from visual and electronic threat to own forces. Jamal and Mustansar carried out most of these missions with Moazzam and Ejaz Minhas as Navigators. The last aircraft used to leave station at sunset. At least once the C-130 crew sighted a pair of Indian MiG-21s.

There were no roads beyond Dasso and carriage of supplies on mules or porters was very slow. Therefore, the squadron was tasked to conduct aerial delivery missions at Paiju. Many evaluation flights were flown to assess the correct speed, height and route for the drop. Crew used to go to Paiju on helicopters to physically see the drop execution and the results. Gradually the heights were reduced, keeping in mind the safety of the aircraft and the success of the mission. Flying through the most difficult valleys in the world and carrying out operations in such a terrain speaks of very high professional standard of our transport crew. Najmi, Zubair and Gultasab involved in the selection of DZ.

No.6 Squadron developed a procedure where the C-130 used to fly a high out bound pattern, turn from Concordia, maintain a steep descend, configure for the drop and then drop at 14000 feet. It was very tricky and only experienced and seasoned pilots could do the drop, it was really a difficult DZ.

- (a) On 11 December 1988 the first para drop mission (dummy drop) sortie was carried out as a trial in the general area Paiju.
- (b) On 18 January 1989 a trial drop was carried out in the general area Paiju. All the parachutes were opened with no loss to the stores, however one parachute was slightly damaged and all the skid board were cracked.
- (c) On 06 March 1989 a para drop was carried out at Sakardu DZ. All the parachutes opened and there was no loss of stores.
- (d) On 13 April 1989 a trial para drop was carried out in the general area of Paiju; all parachutes opened.

Quaid Observation Post- June 1987

BILAFOND La is the second pass from the East after Sia La that leads to Siachin glacier, Bilafond la in local Balti language means the pass of butterflies on both sides of the pass are high mountains which looks like butterflies. The route leads from Skardu- Dansum-Goma –Gyari- Ali Brangsa which is at 16000 feet and derives its name from Iranian missionary Ali Hamdan who in 14 century AD traveled through the area , his tomb is at Khaplu. Ali brangsa lies at the lower end of Siachin glacier on the stony terrain, from here one can see the Bilafond la which is a mass of snow.

In 1984 the Indians had occupied the pass and established one bunker post right in the middle of the pass on the glacier, on the left side of the pass rather on its left wing Indians had two posts name Rana and Akbar ,Pakistani special services group established Quaid observation post on the right wing of the butterfly in April 1986, at an altitude of 21,000 feet it stands out as the loftiest feature in Bilafond la overlooking Rana, Akbar tops in the West, Prem post in North and Yaqub where enemy lay entrenched in East. Its base camp is at four hours foot journey from Ali Brangsa . The next camp that is the post takes eight hours to climb as it involves technical climb through ice screws ,crampons, ropes.The observation post was another 100 yards up involving rope climb . This observation post gave fabulous view of the Siachin glacier , any enemy movement across the glacier was easily detected and engaged through own artillery fire, restricting enemy movement to the hours of bad visibility .This post was a thorn in the enemy side, Post itself had just two high altitude tents and one 12.7 machine gun in a radius of ten feet, it was an isolated perch on an eagles nest notched in the overhang of a cliff that apexed to the summit. Post used to be manned by the regular and special services group officers.

From 1986 onwards all newly commissioned officers were required to spend three months in the glaciated war zone more over all deficiencies in terms of manpower in the deployed regiments were up graded to full strength . Quaid top from air looked like a swelled octopus with its three major tentacles spreading and sloping down, every third day depending upon the weather it used to be replenished with provisions . In November 1986 severe weather torn the tents and bad weather prohibited any rescue or replenishments at the top . Later Captain Zafar {70 long course} and Captain Akmal of special services group along with six sepoy attempting to come down to base camp met tragedy enroute. Captain Akmal died along with Sepoy Ajmal, Javed and two other soldiers, Captain Zafar and other three survived as they were helilifted from the Quaid base by army aviators in time and taken to the Skardu hospital and later to CMH Rawalpindi ,where they had to under go amputations due to frost bite.

Army Aviation use to supplement the Quaid complex by dumping food, ration and ammunition at the Quaid base camp, evacuation of casualties also took place from Quaid base camp.

On 20th June 1986 weather was bad, Naib Subedar Atta along with,Naik Younis, Lance Naik Jahanzeb, Sepoys Nasrullah, Fiaz, Tahir, Allah Yar, Sher Ali,Arshad and Zulfiqar were holed into their igloo by persistent snow blizzard for two days. Major Shoaib Awan was the Aviation Flight Commander in the area, he narrates” We had only one Lama and one Aloutte operating in the area,other four Lamas were all in Rawalpindi undergoing

periodic inspection. Daily we would come from Skardu to Gyari and Ali Brangsa. There were reports of likely Indian attack on the post. Indians had stepped up their artillery fire which was a constant danger for the helicopters especially the air burst. We have been flying over the Quaid OP in the past, sometimes it was just to cheer their morale other times it was in connection with aerial reconnaissance. Due to limited space at the Post we have never landed there, moreover we used to be in the line of sight & fire of Indians". On 22nd June 1987 Indian 4th Jammu & Kashmir Battalion supported by artillery opened fire on the post, Indians had made full use of their MI-17 transporter helicopters who would stack the heavy load near front line from where Cheetah[Lama] helicopters would transport them to the edge of glacier.

On the night 23/24 June 1986 Indians led by Captain Partap Singh attempted to come on the top but failed, however on 26th June after a fierce battle which had already wounded Subedar Atta and killed all his companions less Sepoy Arshad and Zulfiqar who jumped from 300 feet and miraculously survived the ordeal. Indians under Subedar Bana Singh crept to the top where Naib Subedar Atta of Special Services Group resident of Chak No.125 Sargodha was alone and wounded, waiting for the enemy to come on the top with probably last round in his chamber. Subedar Atta, though continued to fight till overwhelmed by the Indian assault. When the sun sets down on 26 June there was no more Quaid observation post it was now Bana post

In July 1986 Indians handed over the dead bodies which they had preserved with great care, wrapped in parachute with Kalima written, giving devil its due share one has to admit that Indians pulled a fast one on Pakistan ,their troops were well led and well trained and they fought valiantly. Later army aviation was utilized to evacuate the casualties from the Quaid base

Loss of Quaid OP was a major blow suffered by Pakistan. Subedar Atta later, was awarded Sitara-i-Jurat

OPERATION QIADAT

27September 1987

An assault on Akbar and Rana posts in the Bilafond La sector on 22nd September 1987 was planned as a retaliation. These two posts located at a height of 19000 feet are not straight in line with each other rather a Saddle joins them.Both had sharp gradients towards own side but gradual slope on the enemy side. This operation was code named as 'Operation Qiadat'

Aviators did all that could possibly be accomplished by helicopters. All available and additional resources in the form of Puma, Alouette-III and Lama helicopters were mustered, under command of Lieutenant Colonel Bashir Baz. From 1st July 1987 onwards Army Aviation started logistic buildup which included shifting of guns, ammunition, fuel, mortars,anti tank rockets and heavy machine guns. Like wise additional Alouette-III pilots were pooled in.Helicopters were tasked exclusively to transport and airlift artillery guns and artillery ammunition to the forward locations. Alouette-III and Lama helicopters were the main flying assets to shift stores, artillery pieces, ammunition and other equipment ahead of

main bases. Although Puma helicopter could not land beyond 4000 Meters altitude but still they heli-lifted two 5.5 inch medium guns at Naram gun position. A 120 mm mortar was slung and transported by Lama to Camp-II area ahead of Ali Brangsa along with its ammunition. This mortar and medium guns at Naram gun position played havoc with the Indian positions at Akbar-Rana, La Bunker and Bana positions. Similarly two, 105 mm pack howitzers along with their ammunition were air lifted in pieces to Gyong Camp-1 position. Simultaneous dumping of ammunition was undertaken in the three sectors i.e Bilafond, Gyong and Chullung La Sectors. Even TOW were heli-lifted to Rahbar Post at 16000 feet.

The most vital role which Lama pilots played was the conduct of aerial recce of the area for all the concerned officers. Sitting at Ali Brangsa one could only plan what was visible but in glacier where weather remains unpredictable and terrain so treacherous that nothing can be planned off the map; aviators flew like eagle and became the eyes of the force. Routes were selected basing upon these aerial reconnaissance and all these helicopter- borne operations had to be coordinated in the over all deception plan which envisaged extensive flying in all the sectors.

Highest Puma Landing-Naram Gun Position

During Exercise Momin (June – July 1988) aviation was asked to drop two, 130 mm artillery guns at Naram Camp (4300 Meters). The gun was dismantled in sixteen parts, barrels being the heaviest 1100 kilograms. Aviation Command was reluctant to accord approval as it was beyond the capability of the Puma and requested advice from manufacturer, who refused permission for under taking the mission due to engine limitations and flight safety.

Corps Commander Lieutenant General Imran Ullah Khan then gave an “Operational Order” to attempt suicidal mission. The Chief of General Staff (General Mirza Aslam Beg) personally talked to the captain of the helicopter and ordered the mission { Crew was Major Sarfaraz and Major Zafar Saleem}. The guns were picked up from Goma for Naram. The flying time was 10 minutes and fuel for “13” minutes was carried. All the doors, fairing, cowlings and unnecessary radio equipment was removed to reduce weight. Two guns and 400 rounds (32 Kg per round) were dropped at the site. After landing the helicopter used to be switched off (above permissible altitude), unloaded, restarted and take off. On the last take off after dropping the load the engine surged but the pilot made safe landing at Goma.

Operation Starts For Rana and Akbar Posts

At 2000 hours on the night 20/21 September 1987 troops of 3 Commando Battalion {commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Safdar Attique} in groups moved forward under Company Commander Major Sana. It is worth mentioning that a day earlier force was recalled due to unforeseen event. Captain Raheel Sehgal was one of the Lama pilot. He narrates” The force had gone forward and there was no wireless communication with it. I was ordered by the commander to pass the message to the force commander to fall back, I flew over them and tried to convey the message through hand signals but to no avail later I landed, wrote the message and dropped it from the helicopter with the help of a stone. It was

duly recovered and force came back”. On 22nd September 1987 the first group moved out followed by other two groups.

The first group was tasked to capture the Akbar Post after scaling an Ice Wall of over 100 feet. simultaneously another group was to move up through Rahbar Post around Tabish feature and capture the Rana Post by 0300 hours same night. The third group was to follow the Second Group and operating through Rana Post it was to capture Akbar Post by 0500 hours, if it was not already captured by the first group.

On 22nd September 1987 at 1800 hours TOW missile were fired to demolish bunkers at Rana, Akbar and La Post alongwith intense artillery bombardment. Captains Nazaret, Imran and Akbar moved forward for the Akbar Post. Navigation on glacier is not a piece of cake and nobody can foresee the difficulties that will be encountered en-route. A small crevice can disrupt all planning and same happened in this venture. The force lost its way and after night long wandering they decided to attack Rana post instead of Akbar. While they were regrouping a Vickers opened fire and killed Sepoys Younis and Razzaq.

A Bold Assault by Two Officers. Captain Iqbal and Captain Salik Cheema were at the La Base and were supposed to follow as and when required. However sensing that assault party has been pinned down due to the enemy fire from the left {Akbar Post} and from the right by La Bunker apart from the Rana itself, these two commando officers decided that the only way to the top was now through the direct route which was the most difficult one. They reached their comrades at Rana Top after traversing, climbing, hanging, scaling ice-snow-rocks and ice-walls etc. Once at the top they realized that as long as the machine gun is there, the assault would remain pinned down meanwhile the defender realizing that he is losing the game brought defensive fire on his own location. Captain Iqbal despite being injured due to shelling, fired the fatal missile that wiped out the enemy machine gun. Captain Salik Nawaz Cheema moved up and as he got close to the igloo where the enemy small arms were firing in a disciplined manner he realized and decided that only way to take out the position is through assault, Captain Salik Cheema ex 67 long course was commissioned in March 1983, he was a company junior under officer of Ghaznavi Company for some time before being de-belted by company commander Major Saeed Qadir {lieutenant general retired} he had won assault course medal in PMA. 127 Medium ack ack regiment located at Sargodha was not his first choice but he loved the unit and remained its adjutant for a year. An avid reader of military history he decided then and there that the moment of decision has arrived, the one that makes history. He assaulted with the Allah o Akbar slogan with grenade in his hand towards the igloo where defender holding his nerves fired the killing rounds and Salik felt forever, with it came the end of operation Qiadat. Captain Iqbal was awarded Hilal-e- Jurat and Captain Salik Cheema was awarded Sitar-e- Jurat. Their bodies were handed over after the winter next year. Captain Raheel Sehgal was present at the end of operation Qiadat he adds *‘once the operation started we were present daily at Giari and Ali brangsa flying and dumping last minute essentials, when it was coming to an end Brigadier TM said to the commander “sir I had enough casualties I am calling them back” later we flew for the evacuation of the casualties which were gathering around Tabish post, this post hardly had any landing space*

but we hovered around and putting ski skids light on snow carried out the mission, later I was present when dead bodies were handed over, Indians had put nets over the dead warriors thus they remained frozen at the post”.

Army Aviation effort in this operation consisted of 1872 flying hours, ammunition dumping of 14,774 rounds in all sectors, 72 casualties evacuated, 22 dead bodies and 115 personnel heli lifted.

CHUMIK OPERATION-April 1989

Chumik Glacier lies within Bila Fond Sector and bifurcates from it at a distance of approximately 4 kms ahead of Gyari. It lies in easterly direction surrounded by two unassailable features. The glacier is terminated by series of heights that lie oblique and are named as Tiger and Panther Series joining a high feature to the South at Point 22158. Any body holding this point dominates the glacier by observation and through artillery fire. Therefore this feature later became the focal point in the battle.

Indians Intentions Detected

Signal detachment at Dansum, one day, intercepted an Indian message showing the intention of capturing a vantage point in Chumik area. Army Aviation went in for reconnaissance and confirmed the establishment of a camp (“Banya Camp”), on the reverse slope of a feature having a height of 22158 feet.

Own Plans

Chumik Operation was our reaction to the enemy buildup with an aim to capture highest feature which would have jeopardized our forces in Sher Complex, neutralizing our vintage Observation Post named Victor which was established in 1985 to monitor the approach to Siachin Glacier. These posts were abandoned in 1986 due to extreme weather but again were reactivated by Commander FCNA Major General Ayaz {Lieutenant General retired} in Gyong La Sector which was dominating the enemy administration camp at Saltoro water shed. In April 1989 enemy started extensive aerial recce coupled with heavy artillery shelling to establish post overlooking the Chumik so that they could deny Pakistani forces concentration and lodgement. They also had a desire to compel own troops to withdraw from Victor and Sher complex which virtually remained under their observation. Foot movement was possible only during poor observation days. On 12th April 1989 Brigade Commander Brigadier Asif Riaz Bukhari was taken on an aerial recce aboard a Lama helicopter piloted by Major Mehdi the flight commander. They were airborne because one of the Lama pilot had spotted Indian helicopters making extensive dumping in the area. Since pilots were flying extensively in the area thus they were in a better state to notice any abnormality in the enemy camp and layout. This observation was supplemented by the Shikari Signal Detachment and artillery observers who noticed marked accuracy in the Indian shelling thus they reached the conclusion that some observer is sitting on the top of the Chumik Feature.

Commander was able to make his plan due to the courageous aerial recce afforded by the army aviation helicopters who went overhead the enemy camp despite threat of anti air craft weapons. Brigade Commander wasted no time and in consultation with the commanding officer of 9 AK Lieutenant Colonel Naqvi conceived the plan of action which was to be approved by the FCNA commander. Meanwhile own Shikari detachment intercepted Indian signal which confirmed that 2 Dogras were on their way to the top with an aim to “detect enemy [Pakistan} observation in Chumik and other details about the area. This information must be passed by 1630 hours on 16 April 1989 without fail “. Own plan contemplated simultaneous advance along two different routes namely Kilo and Tango. After establishment of intermediate administrative camp they were to reach and occupy the Saddle of Chumik located in the south western fringes of the point 22158 and then they were to evict the enemy through physical attack from the Saddle and from T- route.

Captain Sehgal The Aviation Hero of Chumik

Captain Raheel Hafeez Sehgal was one of the Lama pilot who remained associated with this action from the beginning and later earned the SJ for his heroic act. He narrates

“The reconnaissance of 12th April had revealed that Indians had already established 5 new posts including one on the off shoot of Point 22158 and had attained the predominant position with deep observation of glacier. Own troops were engaged by the enemy artillery fire which became deadly after this occupation and it was matter of time before all these own posts would have been reduced to nothing. Even flying became extremely suicidal due to the fact that now own Lama helicopters were in the range of Indian shoulder fired missile and all those own posts in the region which were supported by the aviation were now looking desperate. Immediately ground parties from own posts were sent to check this Indian move. On 16th April another aerial reconnaissance was carried out to see the progress of these ground parties which were sent to capture the saddle of Chumik Glacier. Due to extreme bad weather and razor edged sharp climb, little progress was made by the troops. Time was running short, it was extremely important that enemy should not be allowed to strengthen at the top and contact should be made as early as possible.

Helicopter Sling Operation is The Only Solution

On 19th April 1989 it became clear that ground troops would take time in scaling these heights and only way to reach at the top is through helicopters. Earlier a courageous attempt was made to give a drop to the special services group persons but after seeing the configuration of the ground the drop was discarded and special services group persons were brought back to the base camp. It was now obvious that banking upon ground troops advancing towards the top for eviction of enemy would be fatal in terms of time. Commander FCNA had the same feeling. We all were sitting at the base camp and discussing the future path. Junior pilots were relaxing on one end and flight commander was in the company of commander FCNA, who said “you got to do something, this nation is looking towards you,

we do not want that Quaid OP history should be repeated". After spending some time with the commander, Major Mehdi came towards the pilots and said "gentlemen time is running out of hands, we have to respond to the situation, we have to drop a person to achieve victory because even one person now can effectively hold the enemy,, we will drop the person at any cost".

The Crew Is Selected

Captain Zia ud Din a Lama pilot was on his second tenure in the Siachin glacier he further narrates

" After this motivating speech we all were fired up. Among the pilots sitting there were Major Hashim, Major Safdar, Major Ali Abbas, Major Jaffery, Captain Naeem Captain Mahboob apart from the Captain Sehgal and myself. All in all there were over twenty pilots attached with the Lama Flt. After lot of deliberations and keeping in mind the aviation aspect of operation it was decided by the flight commander that Captain Sehgal would be the captain in command of the operation, Captain Sehgal had already volunteered for this operation. The reason being that he was more familiar with the lay out of the Chumik Feature ,he was light weight and tipped the scale in his favour. He also had the maximum flying hours in the area. Captain. Sehgal declared that I will have the co pilot of my own choice and he selected me .I had flown numerous times with him and we both had reached a stage of understanding where without saying a word we knew what other wants. I had full trust in his capability in carrying out such suicidal mission. We got down to our planning of fuel, weight calculation, consultations of flying performance charts etc but we realized that never before in the history of helicopters had ever been a operation of such magnitude carried out. We had to under sling an officer Captain Naveed to the top of this feature. All details had to be sorted out leaving nothing to the chance. We did not have any proper sling for this purpose so we made good of rope. Next was the safety of the officer while hanging with the rope under the Lama.

The chilling winds with freezing temperature can make ones body numb within minutes, the flying aspect of controlling the helicopter in such configuration demands extreme pilot-ability. Already it was known that Indians are also on the move for the top, their team was led by a Captain Vijay Kumar.

Captain Sehgal further narrates

" I had selected Captain Zia Ud Din because he used to be very gentle on the controls. I was sitting in the helicopter when I saw Captain Naveed who was a lean and thin officer. I could see the anxiety on his face I called him and told "Brother do not worry, I am not going to dump you, either we all are going to live or we will die together".

The length of rope was measured, all doors were removed along with the seats and other equipment. Captain Zia ud din grew as a professional aviator and later commanded 21 Army Aviation Squadron at Dhamial. After his command tenure, he led the Pakistan Aviation Contingent in Sierra Leone. He was to return to Pakistan in August 2004 but unfortunately he

embraced shahdat in July 2004 while travelling in UN MI-8 helicopter in Sierra Leone. He stood approved for colonel rank and would have been promoted on his return. It was a great loss for army and Army Aviation in particular.

Lama gets Airborne with Captain Naveed, Under Slung

Captain Sehgal narrates “ At 0930 hours we started the helicopter amidst prayers and hover to few feet. I had my movie camera with me which I gave to one of the colleague Captain Aamir Zafar who recorded this historic sortie. Slowly we lifted Captain Naveed and got airborne. In Lama there are two ways to drop a sling load one is mechanical and other is electrical, to avoid any accident we disconnected the electrical sling drop fuse because there is a chance that Captain of the aircraft may accidentally press the button. Our flight commander Major Mehdi and Major Hashim were also in the air to guide us. As we got airborne and started climbing up gradually the winds started getting nasty. Captain Naveed felt the lashing winds, already rope had tightened around his waist with his machine gun tucked under his chin jabbing its butt.

As the helicopter reached the desired height and started on its approach towards the ridge line I got a call from my flight commander cautioning me about the Indian post which had Fired a missile towards the helicopter, and then the winds started playing. Captain Naveed was oscillating from left and right, one moment I would see him on my right and next moment he would be on my left, as I reached the top I heard a banging sound and controls became sluggish despite my best effort they refused to act. Suddenly we started losing height and controls became sluggish it was blade stall, as I was descending I put the helicopter towards a gap in between the peaks, altimeter was showing maximum rate of descend.

Safe Drop Accomplished

As we were flying towards the gap a patch of cloud obscured it and we went right through it, it was at this stage that I left the controls and sat back thinking that it is all over. There was near panic in the cock-pit and Captain Zia admits that he had offered his last prayer. In the second helicopter which had the flight commander and Major Hashim, both instructors on helicopters, and in radio communication with Captain Sehgal, they were motivating and directing him. Captain Sehgal further narrates “After few seconds which looked like eternity, we came out of the cloud, it was like getting a new life, slowly I touched the controls and they responded so I came out of dive and turned around to set course again for the post. As we entered own side from the Indian, I recalled the conversation which brigade major had one the day with one of the ground- detachment at the Chumik in which he scolded them for not firing on enemy helicopters. True to their words as we entered I saw the fire coming towards the helicopter, I frantically shouted to the other helicopter to stop this firing. There is a mirror in the Lama helicopter through which I could monitor Captain Naveed being slung. Now when I looked at the mirror I saw Captain Naved almost unconscious, that was the breaking point. In despair I handed over the controls to Captain

Zia, later when I saw through the mirror I realized that Captain Naveed is alive and was adjusting his gear, I again took over the controls, at that time we were about to overshoot the intended dropping point which I had selected contrary to the recommended place for the reason that after extensive flying around this feature I was more knowledgeable about the terrain also from aviation point of view I selected a place where future operations could be attempted. I immediately lowered the collective and released the sling load, by the grace of GOD the landing was safe and we headed back towards own position amidst enemy fire.

Second Sling Drop

As per planning, another person Naik Yaqub from Special Services Group was also to be dropped at the Saddle which was done promptly as Sehgal and Zia were now more confident. Captain Sehgal adds further “When we landed after second drop we got the message that batteries for radio set had to be dropped, so we went for the third time and dropped the batteries. This shuttle service was to continue, we were told that a ruck-sack has also to be dropped at the peak, that was the last mission which we flew on that day before weather became so bad that no flying was possible for next 48 hours”. Hats off to Captain Naveed and Naik Yaqub for making history and writing a new chapter in the annals of not only Pakistan Army but also in the journals of military profession all over the world.

The Three A's of Strength

On 21st April 1989 two days after the first drop, the weather did not permit another helicopter sortie but action was already underway at the highest battle field in the world where Captain Naveed after retrieving the bundle and Naik Yaqub who was blue with cold, had already opened fire at the Indian posts of Sadhu and Ganga. His only lifeline was the wireless set through which he transmitted signals intending to confuse the enemy. He succeeded, regarding the quantum of troops, but situation was precarious; if he did not get the supplies within next 24 hours all this effort would go in vain with his own and Naik Yaqub's survival at stake.

Interestingly in year 2003 Major Naveed SJ, was serving in 503 Aviation Base workshop. When asked about the feelings on that day when he was at the peak with bad weather and no hope of supplies. His immediate response is a gaze in the sky as if thanking the Almighty and after a pause of trance says *'There were three 'A' which gave me strength- ALLAH, Army Aviators about whom I was confident will come the moment there is tinniest of break in weather and third A was the 'Aan'-the pride of being a Pakistani soldier. This pride was built on my 'Qasam' which I took years ago in Pakistan Military Academy's black top parade ground and the respect given to us by our country-men and the prestige of my regiment'*.”

Night 21/22nd April 1989 was very tense and tough for the inmates at three bunkers at Dansum, the brigade headquarters. There was no communication with two men party dropped at Chumik Peak they were at their own. Reports of enemy climbing to dislodge them were

pouring in. No body slept that night. The air inside the bunkers was filled with cigarettes smoke, even non smokers were puffing. The discussions in these three bunkers revolved around what next to do and praying for weather to give a break.

Keeping Alive

ON 22nd April 1989 Major Safdar, another bold Army Aviator of Siachin took off to ascertain the situation at Naveed Top and relayed the good news regarding their being alive. Captain Kamran was the next one to be slung by helicopter to the top. As the helicopter got airborne his harness gave way resulting in his being somersaulted. From a distance it looked as if he is doing aerobatics, all his big pack contents flew away, in the end he was safely dropped at the post. By the end of the day a total of eight persons along with supplies were dropped at the top and situation was under control now. Major Nihal Jaffery made valiant attempts and finally dropped igloo hut parts. Troops had to be supported at the top for whom after God their only hope lied in Army Aviation. As narrated by Major Safdar.

“The method of dropping supplies was interesting. The packets of rations, tent, kerosene oil, stove and ammunition would all be bundled. The helicopter would take off and unload in the air at a certain height, Since these drops were carried out in motion, most of the time the bundles would roll down the precipitous slopes and would be irretrievable. Some method had to be devised to prevent this wastage and to ensure that the supplies were delivered intact. One ingenious method adopted was the insertion of a Bamboo pole inside the bundle. This ingenuity worked, whenever a bundle would start rolling down; the jutting end of the extended Bamboo pole would get stuck in the fresh snow. It would take a couple of rolls but by then the momentum of the fall would peter out and it would stop. At such an altitude of over 22000 feet, with cliffs going vertically upwards, the risk of bringing the helicopter to a complete halt was a dangerous feat. I tried it tentatively, the engine sputtered but responded, it had sustained the pause and could manage the final ascent. I then put this thought into practice. I had a rope hanging from the load, through the mirror, when I saw the warrior at top tugging at the rope, I unhooked the load. It fell like a ripe plum at Captain Naveed’s feet”. Captain Sehgal adds following on supplies “Extreme low temperatures at altitudes above 6000 meters rendered the troops incapable of opening of loads{bundles}, thus large knives would accompany each luggage consignment to enable cutting of ropes by the recipient. At such altitude it was not possible to cook food therefore cooked food had to be heli-lifted and dropped at the top.”

Naveed Top was about 150 meters short of Kamran Top and from Kamran Top the distance to the peak was again about 150 meters. The commander wanted to know about the enemy dispositions on the reverse slope so that troops, who were being slung and lifted to the Naveed Top were made well aware of what lay in store for them. Major Safdar was asked to fly a mission over enemy lines and to reconnoiter the area. The suggested route was to take off from the base and then a straight eastwardly flight to Point. 22158, up and across it. As he soared high up, he decided to follow another route; he could count on his luck and fly over the enemy from their rear. The first approach was more perilous because the enemy gun

positions at Agra I and Agra II would straight away spot him, and the chance of completing his mission looked highly impossible. He flew over the Saddle, towards the South and going deep down Gyong, he swerved to the east and took the Northerly heading over enemy deployment at Sadhu. Straightaway he spotted an enemy helicopter pad, made of wooden planks that could be assembled, put together and installed at any place of choice. In close proximity of the helicopter pad he noticed five tents of the enemy and he could count eight enemy soldiers who had become dumb-founded on seeing him. His co-pilot Major Jaffri spotted a well dug bunkered machine gun position in the eastern margins of Point.22158. Before the enemy could collect their wits about, he had whirled up the chopper over the peak, taking a sharp but measured dive into the depth of the clearance, he made it home accomplishing his mission most fruitfully.

Casualty Evacuation

At Chumik when the feature 22158 was occupied there were casualties to be evacuated. For this an innovative plan was hatched. The helicopter would take a load of 25 kilogram in a basket, this basket would be attached at one end of the rope, suspended from the belly of the helicopter. Load would be unhooked, while the helicopter hovered above Naveed Top and in place of load, the casualty would be duly harnessed, hitched, and flown back to the base camp. Major Safdar on one such mission had a close call. Casualty was hitched to the helicopter, he {Safdar} could see the heavy back pack bulging on the back of the casualty, on the signal to move, Major Safdar pulled the collective but Lama remained unmoved and drifted to the left and started sinking, from his vast experience of flying in the Siachin Glacier, Major Safdar realized that end is near and only way to survive is to unhook the casualty, co-pilot shouted and informed him of impediment but Major Safdar was adamant and replied “either we are going to make it together or die with him”. Using all his experience Major Safdar was able to inject the life into the Lama just feet’s short of the sheer fall. The casualty had already collapsed as reported by the second helicopter following, and was limping on one side.

Major Safdar headed Skardu where medical facilities were located, when he landed there, already the Low Fuel warning light was on, casualty survived. Later it was revealed that he had more than 60 kilogram of load in his back pack.

Epilogue

Chumik operation was the first major triumph of Pakistan Army in the glaciated conflict, it also marked the end of Siachin conflict for some time as both countries announced cessations of hostilities during a meeting which took place between 17-19 August 1989 at Rawalpindi.

CHULLUNG OPERATION July 1992

Chullung Sector

A track connects Goma with Chullung. from Chullung the route leads to Adil Post which is the sector headquarters. The helicopters had to operate in enemy line of sight and within the effective range of shoulder fired surface to air missile{SAM} while crossing Chullung Base towards Adil Post. The highest landing point in this area is Chullung at a height of 4000 meters. However, Lama helicopter used to land at Panther and Baqir Posts which are 5300 meters and 5000 meters high respectively.

Headquarters Force Command Northern Areas{FCNA} had planned an offensive operation in 'No Man's Land' in the Chullung Sector of 323 Brigade. On night 30/31 July 1992 Lama Flight received a reconnaissance mission in the area of operations, the details of which were not communicated with the instructions that necessary coordination was to be carried out with the supporting brigade headquarters. Lama helicopter No 2686 piloted by Major Khalid Sohail Sultan and Lama helicopter No 2689 piloted by Major Muhammad Mujahid Asad reached the brigade area of operations. Initially both helicopters were utilized for transportation of personnel, dumping of ammunition and shifting of mortars. During the later part of the day, Lama flight commander was instructed to drop 6-8 soldiers in the vicinity of Commando Ridge located in the 'No Man's land'. The flight commander postponed the mission, as the brigade staff could not provide any information regarding the strength and location of the enemy in the area. The mission was finally flown as per the requirements of FCNA and the local brigade commander in general area La Bunker. It was aborted when Lama helicopter No 2689 was hit by a bullet while hovering at Panther Post. Both helicopters refueled at Chullung and returned back to Skardu after 2000 hrs, where post flight inspection revealed that helicopter No 2686 had also been hit by a bullet which had passed through the Main Rotor Blade.

On 31st July 1992, a mission was planned for Two Lama helicopters to be utilized on 1st August 1992 for reconnaissance in 323 Brigade area. Next day, the Lama helicopters No 2692 piloted by Major Khalid Sohail Sultan with Major Babar Ramzan as copilot. Lama helicopter No 2694 piloted by Major Safdar Jananzeb and co-pilot Maj Khalid Sohail took off from Skardu and reached Chullung at 0810 hrs. At 1030 hours Commander 323 Brigade contacted the flight commander and briefed him about the tactical situation, which warranted "Saddle area" to be flown over. The flight commander suggested that both the helicopters should gain height while remaining in own area of operation for observation and reconnaissance. After a few minutes while the helicopters were landing at Adil, the GSO-3 was informed by Baqir Post that enemy helicopters were hovering behind "La Bunker" area for conducting aerial shoots.

The operation was aimed at establishing a new post, called "Panther Post" at an altitude of 5300 M. The conduct of operation echoed the manner of Chumik Operation. At 1125 hours, the helicopters took off for Panther Post, knowing fully well that enemy is waiting for them, but the observation was so vital for the forthcoming operation that this threat was put aside. When approximately ½ km short of Panther Post, Lama helicopter No 2692 was hit by a missile fired from enemy post. The missile hit the tail rotor of the helicopter and Major Khalid Sohail Sultan, the pilot gave a call on radio" he had been hit and

going down”. The helicopter crash landed in area Chullung La. Witnesses reported that 1/3 of the tail boom had flown away after impact of the missile which was found lying 1.5 kms from the main wreckage. The impact of the helicopter with the ground resulted in the shahdat of all the occupants: -

Brigadier Masood Naveed Anwari

Major Khalid Sohail Sultan

Major Babar Ramzan

In ensuing operation 50 of our valiant soldiers embraced Shahadat.

REMEMBERING SIACHEN

It is almost two decades when the first sortie for Siachin was flown. Out of the pioneer Alouette pilots presently only Major General Azam and Brigadiers Rashid, Tahir, Inam Karim, and Ifzaal, are still flying. Most of the original breed of Lama pilots have retired or the young ones have now risen to the ranks of lieutenant colonel and above. Name of every pilot who has ever flown in Siachin and every technician who has made it possible needs to be written in gold.

Reminiscences Of A Squadron Commanding Officer

Lieutenant Colonel Kamal Khan of 5 Squadron was at the helm of affair in the initial days. His recollections include following” I was Commanding the Squadron when it was the sole operator in those lofty mountains. In 1984 Lieutenant General Zahid Ali Akbar was the corps commander and Major General Javed Nasir the Frontier Works Organisation {FWO} Commander. Both mutually decided to close the FWO Flight at Gilgit to make all resources available for the Northern Area operations. My Squadron had its one Flight at Chitral looking after the Lowari Tunnel project, other flight was at Gilgit for KKH and rest of the elements at Skardu. We were having trouble sailing in two boats. Technically the squadron was the under command unit of the FWO. I being the senior aviator present, apprised the commanders of the technical limitations of Alouette helicopter and suggested that like India we should employ Lama helicopters.

Till 1984 there was no oxygen equipment for the pilots. It was purchased in the same year but there was no proper place in the helicopter for its installation and it was a make shift arrangement as pilots had to constantly undergo rapid altitude transitions from 20000 feet and below. Within the helicopter, there would be one cylinder with two pipes jutting out, the pilots would inhale the oxygen in gulps when ever they reached the desired height over 12000 feet. For the first time physiological impact of high altitude on pilots was addressed and courses were given at PAF School Karachi which we all including myself attended where we underwent chamber tests. Limits of 60 hours of flying or 21 days was imposed which ever comes earlier. Regarding operations, Puma used to carry the supplies up till 4000 meters and Alouette would start dumping from there up till 5500 meters carrying 20-30 kg of weight.

In July 1985 Vice Chief Of Army Staff{VCOAS} General Khalid Arif came to the visit of Northern Areas. It was the same time when 323 Brigade was established. Coming back to the visit the VCOAS was there to assess the feasibility of maintaining present posts. He was accompanied by the Qasim Aviation Base Commander, Brigadier Nauman. During the presentation VCOAS asked the base commander "What can you do for the sustaining of the posts? Brigadier Nauman replied "We can do all that army requires us to do but it would take time in dumping". I was asked to produce exact weight calculation and present it next day. Next day VCOAS went to Saddle with me and landed at International Himalayan Expedition Camp{IHEC}, where after getting down he felt the strain of lack of oxygen due to non acclimatization. Later VCOAS complained of head ache for two days but he was more wise on the area. The requirement was to dump 450 tons of logistics till 30th September 1985 at forward posts. I calculated the loads in terms of trips and made the presentation to the VCOAS, later all Alouettes were attached from all over the country including Corps Composite Squadrons for this purpose. There were 8 Alouettes operating at one time with four on flying service and other four on rotational maintenance. At Conway Saddle Captain Yaseen an infanterian was dropped in a fast taxi for the first time, in second sortie fuel was dropped and in the third his tent-age was dropped. With me on the controls was Major Khalid {later Brigadier}.

Lieutenant Colonel Zia Ud Din admits that while flying towards Skardu from Qasim on his first tenure he kept on asking his captain about the K-2 peak as that was the only name which I knew. Once he became captain of the Lama he got a chance to fly around K-2 not as an operational necessity but out of inquisitiveness." I was part of a two Lama formation and some how the other I ventured around K-2 and went towards the Chinese side so far so good but when I tried to turn around towards own side the helicopter refused to climb the reason was the cloud cover which had obscure the sun light. After few minutes the real panic sets in because fuel was running short and in case if I force land then there was no chance of my rescue because nobody would look around for me in this area. After some time I got a lucky break as there was a gap in the clouds which allowed the sun light to pass through. I made use of that and came back safely. He further narrates that in the beginning the local population used to duck and run for cover when ever there was noise of helicopter but later they got used to it. As a policy of squadron we would carry sweets and edibles and would throw them towards the children. Later the local population would put up a white cloth which indicated that some one needs medical evacuation and majority of time we would pick them up while going back towards Skardu. It should be kept in mind that where Lama would take only 10 - 15 minutes to reach Skardu the road transport would take 8-10 hours. Initially one house was requisitioned from Northern Area Works Organisation{NAWO}. At the end of 1988 we had an eye on a house near a mosque road and it was christened as the new Lama house. Its rent was Rupees 7000. Squadron used to pay the 2000 and corps used to pay the balance amount. Electricity was very low thus squadron bought a generator and a 26 inch television along with Video Cassette Recorder. Another house was also requisitioned for married officers.

A six hours conversion on Lama helicopter was conducted either at Qasim Base or at Skardu. Co-pilots were again taught how to mark the maps but captain of the helicopter used to do everything. Lieutenant Colonel Talat Sheikh did his conversion on Lama while flying

from Qasim to Skardu with Major Javaid “after landing at Skardu, Major Javaid told me to go solo and I did so” narrates Lieutenant Colonel Talat and he further highlights that this was the confidence which instructor pilot had in himself and his student. In 1995 autorotation on Alouettes were taught to youngsters at Skardu by Lieutenant Colonel Bhangoo. There was limit of 60 hours of flying or 21 days whichever comes first. Co-pilots and captains would remain together 24 hours; they would dine and walk together thus understanding each other in totality. Major Khalid Rana commented that even dances on television would be discussed in terms of flare.

Lieutenant Colonel Zia Ur Rehman narrates that the only painting which he has ever made in his life was at the Lama House when the bad weather suspended flying for over a week, his colleague Lieutenant Colonel Anees learnt cooking at Lama House and became so good that in the end he had to cook in all squadron parties which were quite frequent. He also planted lot of roses as a hobby. Lieutenant Colonel Mazhar was addicted to J.R. Tolkiens and finished many of his books at Lama house. Most common feature was the regular walk in the evening and weekly fishing trips towards the Satpara Lake

For the families there would be outing in the form of camping or brunch at Shangrilla. During summer the incoming helicopter from Qasim would invariably bring the mango crate which would be shared with the troops at the posts. There was an invisible relationship between pilots and the troops at the posts. It was the policy of Lama Flight to take the freshly cooked flying meal for the posts apart from cigarettes and magazines which are most wanted items in Siachin. Most of the officers at the posts were volunteer from varying arms and luckily if they have their unit officer in aviation then he would be looked after. Like Lieutenant Colonel Hidayat would take fresh cake from Rawalpindi for his ex Piffer regiment officer at the post and when he completed his tenure even then “Hiddy” would take the cake for the post. Lieutenant Colonel Alamgir remembers one captain Jawad Aslam who was in Piun Sector and had come as a volunteer. His mother from Lahore send a parcel for him care of 8 Squadron and that was duly delivered to the officer at the far flung post. Alas the officer died in an avalanche few days later and when his dead body was recovered a diary was found in his parka in which he had vowed to join aviation after his tenure of duty.

Many aviators who are flying in northern areas these days had their first experience of aviation in Siachin. In mid eighties as a policy young officers after passing out from PMA went to Siachin and many of them remember the days when after God they had faith in the Army Aviation. In 1988 one engineer officer while descending down from Yousaf Post lost his crampoon and shoes and had to walk for hours on snow in socks. His only hope of survival according to him was to reach the Ambush Post because from there I knew I would be heli lifted and he was. Same feelings are echoed by Lieutenant Colonel Khalid Shahbaz who in 1988 as a captain was at Tabish Post “the day I got frostbite I was worried and in great pain but soldiers in igloo kept my morale high by saying don’t worry helicopter will pick you up “.

In the beginning the troops were not educated about the helicopters resultantly many accidents took place like Captain Farooq who after getting down at Dansum raised his hand to thanks the pilot but instantly got his fingers chopped off by the rotors, same holds true for

aviators like Major Danyal of Puma who after getting on board threw the walking stick back to the soldier and the stick got into whirlwind of the rotors, the helicopter resultantly had to be stranded at the post for a day before repairs could be undertaken. Brigadier Kaukab joined aviation in 1978 and later served in northern areas as part of 5 Squadron before proceeding to America for cobra conversion. He later served again in Siachin as part of 8 Squadron in 1988 and 1989 when he was the flight commander of Lama Flight. His reminiscences of those days are “ While undergoing cobra conversion and later as part of on job training with Americans I noticed that they would daily have the mission debrief in the evening, same I applied at Lama flight. In those days we were getting the missions at odd hours regarding dumping etc. These missions when performed in hurry would always leave room for improvements so we started with daily brief and debrief in the evening. I met Commander FCNA and apprised him of the situation. My stance was that we can give better output provided his staff gives the mission in advance.... They should only tell us the task and leave rest to us. FCNA staff should coordinate with subordinate formations for fuel and other details. Once these things were ironed out then pilots were able to concentrate more on flying aspects. In the briefing session we tried to keep it as informal and informative as possible. As a flight commander it was my responsibility to ensure that pilots are not over fatigued and are getting proper rest. As a policy at times pilots were given forced rest and days off. Equal flying distribution was also my domain. It was in this time [1989] that we shifted our accommodation in the famous Lama House from commissioners residence. The major flying hazard was the ego and enthusiasm of the pilots. Senior pilots may be able to undertake a certain mission and earn laurel but then it becomes precedence for the field formation to quote this thus putting extra pressure on the junior and inexperienced pilot. The scarlet thread was to accept own and aircraft limitation. It was not easy to establish the authority of flight commander in accepting or rejecting a mission on the basis of technical viability”.

In Siachin glacier as per policy which was evolved after bitter accidents that ground parties are not moved during summer period after sunrise mainly due to the persistent danger of avalanches which to date have inflicted more casualties than enemy fire. Same way aircraft and pilots have limitations and they had to be followed. Nothing hampers morale more than a casualty which occurs due to short sighting on part of officer”.

Brigadier Tahir had his taste of Siachin flying as a young captain in 1985 and second tenure in 1987 both in his words were taken as enjoyable activity. He further narrates” The culture prevailing was of flying oriented, there was a sense of pride in what we were doing. Even off time the aircraft limitations used to be discussed. Then there were constant mutual exchanges of views about approaches which at that time revolved around climbing or normal. Aircraft technical book dash 10 was part of bed side library and religiously consulted by all pilots before sleeping and in any case it was a good remedy for any new comer complaining of amnesia”. Regarding Fog of War which persisted between 323 and 62 Brigade he adds” 323 Brigade was commanded by Brigadier Mushtaq and Major Munir Akbar was the brigade major. On other other hand 62 Brigade was commanded by Brigadier Rehman with Major Javaid of artillery as the brigade major. Lieutenant Colonel Jamil was the Commanding Officer of 5 NLI and Lieutenant Colonel Julian Peter was the grade one staff officer for operations of FCNA. The locations of posts of both brigades in Chullung Sector

were such that their artillery firing over each other was taken as the Indian shelling so much so that when Pakistan Ordnance Factory shells were shown to the concerned officers it was passed off as Patiala Ordnance Factory. Aviators were the only one who were operating in both brigades and for some time we were not in picture of what all is going around however when this issue reached to a point where a force under Major Lone known as Lone Force was made ready by one of the brigade for an attack. Then aviation was incorporated in the operation. Later with the progress of time it was noted that whenever own helicopters went for dumping in the area the other post would pass off them as the Indian and vice versa. At times we were fired upon as well but slowly when we discussed the matter among ourselves it was revealed that own helicopters operating between two posts have been reported as the enemy. The final countdown in this saga reached when Major General Safdar Commander FCNA reached on spot for giving final touches for the attack. At that time our Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Kamal Khan took him to one side and explained the phenomena and as a final proof Captain Mahmod and Captain Azhar Akbar flew with the commander towards the Adil Post and landed there. Mean while one artillery officer Major Rehman of Survey Group also detected anomaly in the reports and wisely no fire orders were given although shells were coming in from Adil Post on Sind Langar Post which were taken as the enemy post. Thus this fog of war was removed mainly due to the aviation efforts". He further elaborates the living conditions "There was no recreation, flying itself was recreation in the initial days there was no restriction on the flying and 6-8 hours was normal. Captain Inam Karim once flew 11 hours out of 12 light hours later it was regulated to maximum of 60 hours in a month, good meal was the only recreation. I still remembers that on Eid ul Azha day we had some problem with our kitchen and went to K-2 Motel for break fast and in next eid which I had there when we went for collective outing with the families. We took our coveralls with us and it proved handy because we got an emergency request for a casualty evacuation. Flying was challenging from technical aspect. Once myself and Captain Mahmood had Brigadier Tariq Mahmood with us on board it was a good day for flying we got into strong tail wind although air speed was there but suddenly helicopter had a severe yaw and turned into wind and got static. To me if I have to give words of advice to new comer in the arena then it would be to check his rate of descend at all times. It should be so controlled that needle should remain static especially 4000 meters and beyond then one must make use of sunny side in mountain flying. It is better and safe to fly at one side of mountain rather than flying in the center and last but not the least is the crew co ordination among captain and co pilot".

Colonel Shoaib Awan.

He remained in 5 Squadron from 1978-1982, He went to France for first Lama conversion and later served in Siachin and commanded 8 Squadron as well. He recalls "In September –October 1984 I was the flight commander and Major Khaliq Anjum was the second in command of 5 Squadron and Majors Irfan Bhatti, Khalid, Rashid, Shaukat, Nofal, Nayyar, Alamzeb, Inam Karim, Mahmood and Tahir as the pilots. There were four Alouettes out of which two would operate in Gyong Sector and two in Ali Brangsa Sector. Main dumping was in Bila Fond La and Gyong Sector involving gun parts where as in Ali Brangsa –Gyari Sector it was K-2 oil, gun ammunition, casualty evacuation, command/ liaison and reconnaissance. We were living scattered in Northern Light Infantry Mess and 62

Brigade Mess. There were 2-3 Jeeps at our disposal on loan from formation. After Maghrib Prayers we would gather in the ante room of NLI Mess and planned the next day mission, which would reach us quite late. Our discussions covered all aspects of flying including types of approaches to be made, procedures for sling drop, routes leading to peculiar posts and so onAfter induction of Lama helicopter I was again posted as the flight commander and had Majors Azhar Akbar, Naqvi, Rashid, Mahmood and Safdar as the pilots. We used to take extra care in landing with skis, as imperfect landing would lead to ground resonance, at Conway Saddle. As a precaution we would operate without doors and co-pilot would drop the load.

One of the difficult duty which aviators had to perform was to say no to the leave party. For troops going on leave from Gore especially during eid a heli-lift means saving almost two days of walk up till Skardu but aviators had their own labyrinth of weight calculations to look after. Experienced pilot may over ride few kilograms of weight but same cannot be expected from all.

In the beginning there were no high altitude kits for the pilots and they would fly in normal cover all. The bulky North Face parka was an hindrance in flying thus pilots would only wear the woolen under garments and self procured gloves. Lieutenant Colonel Irfan, narrates an interesting event in this regard "On one of my first winter tenure I was flying as a co-pilot, we were heading towards the Saddle the helicopter was warm with its own heater and suddenly the captain in command opened the window to get the fresh air and within minutes I was freezing and told him so. Later I came to know that one of the un-written convention was to follow what captain wears, who in this case was putting on local Peshmina and Hunza socks ". This problem used to be aggravated in winter especially when pilots coming from Skardu had to land at Gore for refuelling, the sudden and prolonged exposure to minus temperature from hot cabin was too much and resulted in headaches.

Lieutenant Colonel Rashid Baig has one casualty evacuation mission as his most memorable part of memory," In 1996 at the end of our day long dumping mission I alongwith Captain Niazi had to evacuate a 18 years old Sepoy of Chitral Scouts who was hit by an enemy bullet and was bleeding to death at the Post. I had not even seen that post located at 15000 feet but we were briefed at Piun about the general direction. We reached the post and it took fifteen minutes for the casualty to reach the helipad, He was literally red with blood. We were running short of time and on seeing the conditions of casualty we decided to proceed direct to Skardu. Abeam Khaplu it was dark and I could only see the reflection of river at Karpok Bend. Soon the river also disappeared and we were flying now on heading at 4000 meters. I was now maintaing direction with occasional vehicles light moving on track below, finally this ordeal finished when I saw the lights of Skardu and landed at city helipad.

Lama House had one very useful tradition every evening there would be a regular session of mission planning in which the missions for next day would be discussed in details crew would be detailed along with the helicopters, refuelling and other co ordination would be done but most importantly the missions that has been undertaken would also be scrutinised. Every one was allowed to express the follies that he had committed in the mission like taking risk in weight calculations, approaches made, fuel planning and what went wrong in that, what mistakes pilot or co pilot made. The aim was to learn from the

mistakes and no hard feelings were carried to the bed. After mission planning the dinner would be consumed the squadron cook were well trained and they had a major contribution in keeping the morale high as nothing else can replace a warm and well cook food.. Lama Flight apart from its operational obligation also undertook many other projects which included plantation in remote areas by throwing seeds from helicopter, It also took active part in the census of wild bears at Deosai.

DIARY OF AN OFFICER

This diary excerpts are from an officer who was in love with a girl, had gone to Siachen for the sake of an adventure. I have omitted few words, this officer is rather unconventional in character as he has shown no inclination towards religion , his account and record reflects an unusual description of the area and the life pattern.

“There were many stories of glacier warfare especially of winter in which temperature drops to record zero. One such myth which circulated among the new comers was that it is so cold at the post,that urine gets frozen the moment it leaves and had to be broken.On the contrary it is the warmest thing at such heights and its prints on snow remains for hours. However constipation was a common ailment and one of its remedy was to drink the Apricot Oil which was also used for bathing. The the major worry at post was to attend the call of nature.In the absence of any regular bathroom or water it was bit unhygienic but the real ordeal was putting on the high altitude shoes which totally drains energy out at such altitude. The helipads at posts are freshed up prior to the arrival of helicopter with the help of Rafhan Energile or Egg Pudding both of these items were in abundance at posts. Bathing was not possible at posts but at Sector Headquarters after a fortnight some body would indulge in this luxury by heating the snow.Within the igloo the only way of keeping warm was through the oil burner which would remain operative till the time its oil ran out or something goes wrong with its filament.Many accidents of fire took place while refueling it.Its constant black smoke would turn the snow white kit into crow black within days and noise would hammer the brain thus it was nick named as Brain Fucker.The major cause of frost bite was heating body parts especially feet and hands directly over the burner fire.The pain of frost bite is bearable but toothache at these heights is killing.Two jeeri-cans put together with a mattress over it along with sleeping bag would serve as the sleeping cot,needles to say that it was like sleeping on snow.At times for days the snow storm would prevail and sometimes even in the mid of night,snow has to be shovelled from the igloo to allow air for breathing.You cannot stand in the two man igloo and some time days would be spend in lying position. In all this Army Aviation,helicopters and pilots were most revered and talked people with every soldier and officer having one odd incident and tale to narrate about the time when he had a ride in helicopter or met a pilot.

30TH JANUARY 1988

Awoke up at 0800 hours could not get a good sleep, Salik{his old friend, who died in siachen} Samina{the girl he loves} at 0900 hours I was ready to go to Haji Post. Muazzam left for Ibrahim Post, said bye to Captain Dr Cheema, Muzzhair and Saleem Domeli. Climb was difficult, I was carrying my own luggage, 1st stop at Mortor position, 25 minute walk, then onward with three soldiers, saw crevices, we had to make our own way, saw one crevice covered with a iron sheet, journey was not that difficult till Haji Base, where a part from post have come down, I had given my luggage to a soldier. Weather was clear, in halts but there was a blizzard, I kept singing 'papa don't preach' took radio, cells and TV Times, cards. Journey from base to post was terrible, after 150 feet of climb it was all snow, taking rest after few steps, we all were tied with one another, Maskeen was behind me, in simple words terrible, blizzard, tiredness, coldness. Everywhere it was snow, the danger of crevices, slipping etc, rope climb started. After 10th rope onward it was dangerous enough, I twice felt down, but fear of death kept me on. Two crows were flying below, Indian post was visible the three tops, finally after 4 hours I reached the top, the troops said it was an excellent time. I was exhausted laid down for 15-20 minutes. The Haji Observation Post is another 800 yards up, I have now got the mountaineering insignia. Went into 2 man igloo had telephone with Ambush Post, some sex topic, my morale too high, listen to radio BBC, Moscow, Australia etc, had chit chat with Naik Ishaq, Naik Rab Nawaz, had many cigarettes of Capstan, it is 4 feet wide 3 feet high and 7 feet long, terrible conditions. The snow blizzard was there, it rocked my igloo many times had tea, no dinner, went to sleep listening to radio

31ST JANUARY 1988

First day at Haji Post, terrible severe headache again saw Samina in dreams receiving her letters with good news that her parents have agreed. Too cold, went for a piss outside, the most difficult task here, wind still blowing, at 19200 feet thought of writing letters to everyone but the ball point does not work, I have to heat it up frequently, weather was now clear, had breakfast daal paratha and tea. I cannot sit properly in this igloo, communication still off with base camp, many times I have to breath harder, quite a problem the door of my igloo is open I can see the one half of mountain all snow and one crow. saw newspaper. Conditions slightly better but still feet are too cold, here there is no sense of time or day only weather sense prevails, here morale is so so Jawan afraid of opening fire on Indians due to fear of their retaliation artillery, only two naiks and four soldiers have to protect this post what a joke they just want to pass time they are afraid of clear weather because then Indians start firing and today is clear weather.

1ST FEBRUARY 1988

Most difficult night since I left Sargodha, I could not get sleep, twice I woke up due to suffocation, it was painful I was having the sleeping bag in wrong direction I was cursing myself for coming here the morale at its lowest ebb. In the day remain inside the igloo went

out for a piss too cold I am almost a pschyo now, I talk to myself either of future or of past, remained on bed,sore throat and other diseases very difficult task

2ND FEBRUARY 1988

Went out at 1100 hors had a brush and felt better than yesterday again in the igloo my mind raced backward on Salik, it was too difficult to avoid him,it was my mistake to come as volounters, every second is difficult only due to Salik memories I thought of Samina and again evil ideas came into my mind, saw the moon at 1900 hours it is full moon what a beauty it was cool outside remained there for 5-7 minutes ,majestic.

Night

I slept without long jhon it was comfortable, lonliness getting on my nerves I am waiting for a positive reply from Sargodha

3RD FEBRUARY 1988

Got up at 1200 hours playing with my penis at 1230 hours an Indian helicopter came,I went out saw the area with binoculars,jawans too afraid of firing,had talk with shahjee,naubahar and ambush part morale high after talking with them otherwise it is too low read Pakeeza digest rubissh again,I went into fools paradise,had food felt better slept very late, BBC,VOA, Moscow, All India Radio also listened to Ghulam Ali ghazalas on radio.

4 FEBRUARY 1988

Snow blizzard is going on outside,it looks as the igloo will also fly away,did not had anything to eat not even water,headache and light fever and flu and weakness,morale is nowhere you just lying on the mat,thinking of samina and death of Karachi ,must have something to eat

After 2 hours

Nose is running fast ,read poetry from digest,blizzard is still going on,too cold today,don't know what to do still 5 weeks left on this post ,I better lie down ,feeling hungry but nothing to eat,naik ishaq words are still in my mind'sir lets take it as POW in east pakistan'I think it is a better approach but this flu is too frustrating I look like a pow eating sleeping and behaving like animals on this post,well this is war

6TH FEBRUARY 1988

Snow blizzard is still going on it is too cold ,4th night was terrible when I was lokining for water finally I had to chew the ice,todays its samina birthday ,got goldleaf today so

enjoying smoking,only memories here,I was almost pschyo on 4th night curse myself a lot,condition much better too much weakness read saminas letter {old one} wrote letter to ibrar and sherbaz,still no letter ,all quiet on western front,no radio,here so lonely,feet too cold,had telephonic talk with ambush,mortor camp ,salman is in mortor position ,sepoy ijaz of 42 punjab looking after me well,igloo quiet warm,blizzard still going on went for shit,horrible experience,day dreaming a lot,only memories to cheer ,wrote a lot of letter,I just open the door of my igloo to clear my nose and saw sky full of stars but wind too fast and my feet getting cold as I touched the floor with only my socks

7/8TH FEBRUARY 1988

Same snow blizzard remained inside the igloo went for the piss a difficult task 2130 hours,had talk with sajid adjutant,an official letter is for me I hope not 'your services no more required'here different ideas comes into mind,I was thinking earlier of writing demi official letter to general ,explaining them the problems here ,food accommodation morale etc,then to GOC AA command for monument etc,throughout the day I kept on thinking about Hamid uncle,seema baji shanu ,school days,aunty fari,haneefia burger,juices,movies brothers ,war salik Lahore,sami,marriage ,SSG aviation etc,getting pschyo at this time all india radio programme on Love real good,songs etc had a problem here,naik rab nawaz abused ijaz,sort the problem,salman and naubhar are sick,had telephonic with ambush,nothing to do afraid of lying for sleep.same food etc,today india radio explained Pakistan preparation in siachen area,I am thinking of ex Pakistan leave,food in Lahore Karachi,self inflicted injuries etc,negative thoughts,8th almost gone few days left,where is samina,what she must be doing now,I am getting crazy,I am always thinking of death here,I will die here I know god help me,again feeling thirsty too many golds,here all day the life film kept on running in mind you cannot stop it good or bad,I wept today thinking of my childhood than again the death hovered me I am lying in a grave and people are weeping ,my father mother brother friends samina ,yasmeen etc,what should I do ,lets hope for the best ,god help those

9TH FEBRUARY 1988

One month gone two months left a good day went down,they told me I have ten letters but that proved to be simple envelopes,frustration have they got my letters,again poted eight letters today,lying on bed naib subedar latif asked for a favour,to show ration destroyed in landslide,yes I had halwa,frustration I must control it I want to survive here

2110 hours

Mood quite good as weather has changed had talk with salman and viqar and naubhar,did not had dinner as it puts the pressure,feeling hungry now golds finished,wrote letter to tariq and JRK,put on the lower of track suit feeling more comfortable again thinking of samina may be we get married after all also career also coming into mind,fucks it lets pass these days and then I will think,no wind blowing igloo quite warm now,nothing to do again

old memories coming into my mind I kept on thinking talking to my self on different subject like war,philosophy etc,here the values of small things is realised water food light etc,tomorrow I will write lot of this I am depressed,I have not got any reply that must have received my letters,what is the delay?i am still having running nose quite a problem and also breathing at times is difficult ,one feels too much thirsty in igloo only recreation is radio songs at this time

10TH FEBRUARY 1988

Morning,I was sleeping when fire came after two rounds I came out ,the fear was there no body was out side rab nawaz told me to get under a stone it was too cold,I came back into igloo ,total six rounds were fired ,no fear,at all.had breakfast read Men at War again fire has started ,weather too clear enjoying all this ,first combat

Night

Indian again fired 12 rounds in total and them machine gun fire,I remained inside my igloo well if I have to get a bullet why not in a warm place,weather hot remained in track suit had brush and wash face,in the evening had talk with salman,naubhar kept on talking about samina,read her old letters read three men in a raft good story,had fresh meat but I had dinner with halwa than embassy cigarettes same routine ,one more day gone my mind is on samina

11TH FEBRUARY 1988

Nothing unususal weather is again bad remained inside have started ‘Chancellor Manuscript’ at night I was depressed I got no letter viqar has got four

12TH FEBRUARY 1988

Same routine weather again bad read chancellor manuscript,no letter so far I am highly depressed I am thinking negatively I thought about ex pakiistan leave ,Karachi sargodgha even samina but with less zeal at night had talk with viqar than songs on radio twice at night due to suffocation I got up then unlit the burner but then it was quite cold night was difficult to pass

13TH FEBRUARY 1988

Weather slightly better should I go for piss ,how I finished that novel last night,now lying in the bed K-2 has spoiled my mouth had halwa in lunch weather has gone bad ,Rab Nawaz was supposed to go down but no party from Ambush tried to remember samina but vaguely ,why not letters so far,yes they have forgotten me so far,it is life one has to survive

all this, on radio listen to Indian communication it is almost 1500 hours I am going to have a K-2 cigarette, now I haven't seen my face okay let's see but Samina where is the letter

15TH FEBRUARY 1988

Usual sleepless nights suffocation coldness and pain in feet that has increased too much, Irshad slept in other igloo went for piss/shit weather too clear saw Indian post with binoculars two Indian jawans came up Indian started firing artillery and Vickers, remain inside the igloo with Ijaz and Ghafoor kept on reading Kane and Abel, last portion where Richards and Fretayana has fallen in love and my mind raced on Samina, a bit similar story, finished it by noon then slept, noon was usual boring had talk with Dr Cheema, Waseem, Muzhair then with Major Haroon 21c 4 AK regiment

2000 hours

Put on the radio and drama was going on including a lady doctor and a man on telephone usual hello, I at once thought of Samina, same tone and way of saying hello she is on my mind all the times well 'if she really remembers me or not I fear not' well settled at this post 15 days gone pain in feet too much I am going to have a talk on telephone with officers that official letter was pay slip I am gonna get the 1st letter tomorrow may be is it of Samina? I hope she is fine that's all I can wish posted her four letters yesterday, too much loneliness here beard gone a bit too much tomorrow I may go to OP and will also start Prodigal Daughter, I usually talk with my self normally day dreaming no fear of anything prepared for the worst

14TH FEBRUARY 1988

Started Kane and Abel read throughout the day at night jawans came into my igloo quite a chat weather quite bad rang Viqar I am having the urge and need to go for a piss but quite cold outside slept alone a tough night dry throat pain in feet coldness but have to bear this agony

17TH FEBRUARY 1988

Weather clear too much pain in feet finished Prodigal Daughter I love this novel in the night I gave problem to Major Haroon later on to CO 42 Punjab, went for a shit the best I ever had, no wind sky filled with stars, listen to old songs on radio they evoke old memories just relaxing party from ambush will come tomorrow

18TH FEBRUARY 1988

I am thinking of going down after last night experience, the pain in the feet was terrible especially the right one near thumb, many times I cried in aloud and abused myself in pain late in night, I don't know at what time I slept in pain, in the morning party went down now waiting for them to come back, they are going to bring cigarettes, jam, envelopes and one letter... who has written that I don't know but the feeling of this wait and surprise is the major and rather only excitement, I was thinking of Tania the girl I met in the last days at Sargodha and had I got few days more I would have rogered her,, all kind of people especially girls flash back in memory, again acute pain and smoke, weather is clear, lets have one more cigarette

Evening

It was Aleem's letter the first one that I have got haere why not Samina has written so far? May be it is all over or she is sick it is not possible, captain shahid has got a son talked to Salman, wether is clear, pain in feet too much at this time having Taleen the medical tablet but no effects, it is too much throat dry due to smoking again pain, pain, pain, Night will be terrible enough

Night

In my twenty four years of life I have yet to face such kind of pain, a night unlike any other of past, from 0100 hours onwards it was agony, I wished for death pain and only pain, I abused throughout the night, couldnot even place my feet on feet as it was inflammatory sensation, at 0700 finally rang doctor Cheema

19TH FEBRUARY 1988

Party is coming to take me down but it was worst weather in a month, remained in the igloo lied down and acute pain, no breakfast only Goldleafs, read Aleem's letter again and again and remembered the day when he joined the regiment and how I received him and the drama which was played with him. At noon commander 323 Brigade rang, I gave him three problems at 1500 hours I went to relief my self, the most difficult one too windy too cold, I literally had to crawl till that place, my hands got cold feet also, listened to all india radio, due to that walk my feet got alright but only the right one but the left one remains same, may be after evening medicine it gets right, I remembered last time I was having pain I went to MI room in Sargodha and there met her Doctor Samina, why not a letter from her so far, I hope she is alright in Sargodha or Kharian, Doctor Cheema is taking too much interest in me, a good doctor still blizzard going on

Not looking for a night like yesterday

23TH FEBRUARY 1988

Left Ambush base with a hope that I will catch a helicopter in time, the naik of 4 azad Kashmir regiment was in the snow boat, I was walking, we set out towards mortar position, a

clear bright day I was carrying the ice axe ,a difficult path a slippery one many times had to use the ice axe as there was no other way but agin the face of death,too much visibility too clear what a life what an adventure reached mortor position in time ,captain siddique was there {ghazni Company} had a good time with him had the tin mango ,pakora ,tea .Party from camp one reached ,7/8 letters ,five from Samina she has not forgotten me all morale booster her parents has agreed and she has also cleared her gynae exam, all of a sudden life and Siachen looks different,helicopter came and we boarded like Vietnam American soldiers ,it is my first time in helicopter a good journey

At Goma Pasha,Iqbal,Waseem etc were there had a good war on food and bedding,pain is too much,read Samina's letters uncountable times,the mere thought that that her hands wrote these word were soothing and I recalled her slim and beautiful hands and the brown strap of her watch ,I thank God .Too many patients in 50 casualty clearance station,a young soldier of eighteen also had frost bite,kidney failure and broken legs,what a bravery but none to praise,there is only one bathroom,had food from officers mess,my three fingers from right hand also gone numb,too many cigareets in happiness due to samina's letters what a day,I wish she should have been here ,yes I love her,now I will survive these days, I want to go back to Front don't want to live on a bedin this area ,now at bed 13 in CCS

WEDNESDAY 24TH FEBRUARY 1988

Got out from CCs a clear weather settled in a room with Zahid and sherazi,good chaps received three more letters from Samina,parents of mine and samina has agreed,Samina has send long instructions,what a day,at night listen to zahid on guitar slept at 0300 hours ,we shared our love stories

FRIDAY 25TH FEBRUARY 1988

Weather has changed it is now snowing all day just lied down ,Zahid of 27 cavalry and sheerazi were with me,read samina latters again and again enjoying this new feeling of getting engaged ,feets are in better conditions may be on 28th or 29th I go back to GyongLa at nigh read Saminas letters

THURSDAY 25TH FEBRUARY 1988

A clear day ,defence minister came on a visit,enjoyed the sun listen to the radio at night wrote may be over seventeen letters and posted two letters to Samina today,hope she will get them , at night had a joint , Muzzhair has arrived he has wound in neck at Haji post, I got emotional at that

6TH MARCH 1988

Approximately 1100 hours slide area. Dead body of sepoy Ashraf of 71 Field is lying in front of me, the first one to be found at the end of the slide area his body is frozen, he is like a statue his body was found three and half feet under the snow, searching for other bodies, Lhama is coming on to collect all the seven dead bodies. Left Camp One at 0815 hours with Gyong Party, major Humayun was also along, captain Naubhar reached slide area, earlier 24 soldiers of 4 AK regiment were also with him, commander is also on his way from Ambush, Colonel Qaswar still in camp one area, two more dead bodies found awful sight, my eyes are still burning with snow because I did not wear sun glasses and now I cannot see, yet I read the six letters that I received today, two from Samina, one from Captain Mahmood and one from Colonel Basher and one from mother, got a surprise letter from Ijjazz the brother of Captain Tariq, a highly motivated one, bit emotional stayed at slide area till evening, got a snap of myself with Samina's name written on snow, heli lifted two dead bodies, one we shifted to Ghazi position, major Humayun and captain Aurangzeb did not bother to come down at bodies position, me and captain Naubhar were down, at evening we left bodies and moved to camp one, ice on slide started to breakup, I ate daal at slide area and read old newspapers, in one was something about Siachen, In return journey I led the team, Dr Anel was there and his relief Dr Shafqat and Captain Nazim

I wrote to Samina, father and mother and gave these letters to Captain Anel for early post and delivery. Played black queen then talk to Slaeem cobra but Saleem Domaili interfered, went for international flight and then dozed off as have to move at 0600 hours

07TH MARCH 1988

Early move and I took Captain Shafqat ice axe and new gloves, Captain Nazim was with me a difficult route fear of slides there, a cold morning I moved with slow steps in the middle, my stomach was upset so had to use the path, Captain Nazim was too cautious while moving, I kept on thinking about Samina and further days, near mortar position it was very dangerous to move but then I took the responsibility of making the way, ice axe was very useful in this regard, reached mortar position at 0830 hours, Siddique my course mate was very hospitable, tin fruit, pakora etc but at 1330 hours we moved alone for the Ambush but heavy snowfall blizzard, poor visibility forced us back, stomach real upset I went to relieve myself but few pieces remained with my track suit inner, felt very dirty but could not wash it, at night had dinner and futile discussion with Captain Nazim he is very orthodox, Siddique was too hospitable he slept in bunker and gave us igloo, I removed my inner and cleared the legs with wet tissues then a good sleep and dream of Samina

PS wrote five letters

08 MARCH 1988

Awoke up at 1030 hours no party ,wether is good had digest and novels and gold leafs a good breakfast then just gossips,party will come next day early morning,I am going to read old letters now

PS gone through old letters that has made sad going through samina's letters

5TH MARCH 1988

Got up late was doing breakfast with captain aneel and Naubhar outside at 1100 hours got the news that seven soldiers of 71 Field Regiment has come under slide we rushed to that place{45 minutes away} me and Naubhar walk down ,a massive slide we found out odd cap,rukhsack,jerrycan, but couldnot trace the men,a great tragedy a lot of hue and cry ,Colonel Qaswar came down from Ambush at 1600 hours ,I called off the search as I was the senior most nad weather was getting very cold and went back to camp one and had a talk with colonel qaswar in his igloo,he is quite frank and jolly then food , I ate a lot then went to sleep,early next morning I was having the burning sensation in my eyes because I was not wearing the sun glasses yesterday,quite painfull,aneel gave me the eye drops and wet bandages, sky at early morning was full of stars a magnificent scene

4TH MARCH 1988,FRIDAY

I awoke up at 1000 hours had breakfast of halwa puri and at 100 hours I mmoved for ambush I was not carrying the pack ,it was easy to move, abright day had a break at 'Choota camp' then onwards two or three slides came our way,move was difficult without the ice axe but even then it was difficult anyhow I reached camp one by 1500 hours ,had lunch /tea there at night we played we played cards myself,captain naubahar and captain aneel and listen to radio and normal gossip,naubahar is also keeping beard saw old newsweek issue and newspapaer,at night before sleeping I thought of samina for quite a long time

3RD MARCH 1988

Normal day weather clear after getting up I went to 4 AK room and started reading digest in this process in this process I burned one of the sleeping bag with a burner ,I felt the smell but couldnot trace the origin luckily an sepoy came in and saw it,major ansar was also there had lunch then pasha nadeem rafiq and javeed came back and major sulheiri and tariq from Goma,we had halwa and coffee ,It javeed afzal is too courteous all officers of 4 AK are sensible then at night capt sajid told me that I have to go to Ibrahim and then to Yousaf ,next day CO's orders I had charas with habeeb and It waseem was also there,major humayun of 61 Field also join us I told them aboutmy love story slept at 2300 hours a real nice sleep

2ND MARCH 1988

I left with Lt Nadeem after lunch but said good bye to azam tareen of 5Horse ,muzhair and Irafn came to us in the morning,track was clear initially but later on quite a snow we reached gyong in 2 hours had tea with sajid ,wasim was also there then went to Pasha room we talked about PMA days ,had dinner together,commander is present in gyong he is leaving upwards next day with two commanding officers,.At 2300 hours I went to my room for sleep wasim and habib were there,smoke listen to radio etc thoughtabout samina ,she is on my nerves quite a day,since last I got her letters ,habib is from capt aftab unit he is still having the same old habits had tea and cigarettes and then dozed off

1ST MARCH 1988

Zahid of 28 Cavalry left for Chumik went to CCS

28TH FEBRUARAY 1988

Went for walk with azim tareen in goma had snaps ,It iqbal was brought to CCS cerebral idema

9TH MARCH 1988

Party came at 1030 hours I got up at 0800 hours had a smoke,snow is still falling then had breakfast then used an old bunker as toilet,we tied up rope together an SOP in this area in heavy snowfall,myself and nazim ,I am without ice axe quite a problem to walk we moved at 1115 hours ,poor visibility had a break in the way rectified the telephone wire climb was difficult due to snow ,saw that place where I once felt down reached Ambush by 1300 hours captain Dr Cheema was there had halwa and cigarette ,captain Nazim started a futile discussion with DR Cheema,he is that type of person who just want to show his fuckin knowledge had talk with Omar,Viqar,Salaman,I will be going on 11th ,slept at 2200 hours ,no radio thought of samina ,it has now become a routine,I enjoy lying in the sleeping bag and thinking of her

10TH MARCH 1988

Had to get up early due to piss,got two letters one from captain Shaahid and other from tariq Dada,none from samina may be she is in karachi,captain Nazim gone we had brunch at 1330 hours ‘alol okay parathay’ a rare dish in this area then tea with cigareetes,I dozed off at noon,snow is still falling just chat with dr Cheema then telephone talk with all sectors also got two pack gold leafs from rear,a slide broke off the telephone communication with Gyong couldnot get sleep had sex discussion with doctor

11TH MARCH 1988

Weather still very bad had masturbation in the morning just laid on the mat read digest,nothing to report,thought of samina after going through the story in digest had tooth brush today,clothes dirty hair dry what a life,okay few days left waiting anxiously for April then I will be with samina how is she,no more La Balle Dame sans merci.Praying for a good weather .PS Shikari det has caught one Indian message that 'big bear will visit the area soon'

12TH MARCH 1988

At 0845 hours sepoy Fareed came and told me that party is ready for Ibrahim Base,I somehow other made the excuse that I have headache and I wont go,40 minutes later a slide came next to ambush-Ibrahim track a narrow and miracoulsly escapae.15 minutes later we got the news that three men Naib subedar Latif,and suleman and ishfaq came under the slide,they went to inspect an ammunition bunker.We rushed to that place and informed major mansoor ,myself and suleman we conducted the rescue but couldnot locate the exact place where the bunker was and started digging with troops at four different places but futile,in an hour major mansoor was also there,it was panick as we knew that each moment is vital for the lives of these men but we couldnot do anything other than digging and blizzard started blowing it was freezing cold but we couldnot let these men go,it was comrade ship at its best,at 1600 hours my self and suleman went back to igloo as our feet were freezing ,had food and then came back but it was futile and blizzard was too much,

13TH MARCH 'MIRACLE'

We started the rescue mission again and started digging,knowing in our heart that these men have died by now,major mansoor was not there he had gone back to Ibrahim,at 1400 hours we started at new point to dig but no avail ,we had lunch at 1600 hours as we were having the lunch we got the news that place has been found we rushed and till 1800 hours bunker was cleared only one ice axe was there,infact there were two bunkers located next to each other and we found the one but men had been in other one and we found nothing in this bunker,it was very cold and none of us had the courage to call off the rescue but we had to do it one way or the other as hands and feet were freezing with danger of troops geeting frost bite,so finally at 1800 hours I being the senior most called off the rescue and any case I thought that there would be only dead bodies there in the next bunker.At 1900 hours while we were in our bunker we were told by sepoy Faryad that he has heard noises coming from the bunker and he had seen a man coming out,before we reached that area and all the while thinking that Faryad had illusions,the sepoy salman was walking towards us,it was

shoking ,immediately we started digging again and parties from Ibrahim also came down and later after two hours we found the dead bodies of other two.

Salman told us the story that , they were inside the bunker when slide came and all around it was snow and white blindness and he fainted and came back to conscious after some time and felt himself living and he could hear the digging going outside and he also remembers when I called off the digging,he said I wanted to shout and did that but to no avail ,he had a nail cutter and with the help of that he kept on making his way as his hands were frozen and finally he managed to come out alive

14TH MARCH 1988

I reached Ibrahim base camp,it was really comfortable and now I knew why major mansoor went back from the digging,Pakistan –west indies cricket series was going on and I listened to ball by ball of that one day match,salim malik scored a brilliant fifty but to no avail

16TH MARCH 1988

1700 hours,eighteen men are sitting in this ten men igloo,weather is bad thus we cannot move forward,I cannot even stretch my legs as there is no space,it stincks of feet and farts.outside igloo it is 3-4 feet of snow,I have no cigarettes ,suleman is also with me he has to go to other post ,so I am smoking his fags,there is handing –taking over going on between 42 Punjab and 4 Ak,in food had only vermicillies and three plates of that,I was too hungry,listening to radio ,water is coming in through dome on my head and my kit is all wet,now thought of samina,the only way I can ease my tension is about thinking of her

In The Line OF Duty

Siachin was a new frontier and a new challenge for Army Aviation, which is still going on. This forays into the demanding altitude of Siachin had its own share of cost ;the flying accidents. Army Aviation lost equipment and comrades in the frozen heights but not one loss deterred their spirit or dash.

Gyong {Alouette No.5188} 16th June 1986

On 16th June 1986 Captain Nasir Zaidi was detailed on a mission in Gyong sector and other helicopter in the formation was flown by Captain Rashid. Captain Zaidi was No 2 in the formation and he had not seen this area earlier. After getting the weather clearance both helicopters took off from Gyong and after dropping load at rear saddle while coming to Lazwal-II found scattered clouds enroute.

Captain Zaidi entered the haze thinking that since he is very close to Lazawal-II so he will land there soon. On entering haze he realized that he could not see anything and lost contact with ground. The situation was further aggravated because of white out conditions on snow. Immediately on realizing the mistake he tried to make a 180° turn to get out of the haze. After turning he could not appreciate the steep rising ground and his main rotors hit the snow, broke the left wheel, fuselage and finally toppled over. The aircraft was completely destroyed but the pilots walked out safely.

Captain Lilla was the co pilot on this flight he recalls” It was a common phenomenon to take the chances with the weather, so far we have been lucky in this regard. Right from our training in school we have been hammered to respect the weather but situation here was different, it was always our endeavor to get the maximum out of the sortie for the posts. On this day we had gone to drop two commandoes at a forward area to establish a post. I had to help them in getting out of the helicopter thus my straps were unbuckled, real panic set in after we had entered the haze and our contact with ground was lost. It was like flying in a white sea, area is such where even in broad day light pilot has to be careful in flying due to the close proximity of peaks. After the impact rather a split second short of it I invariably grabbed the magnetic compass which is placed in front of pilot, impact was so severe that I was pushed to the rear seat with compass in my hand. After we regained senses we asked each other about situation and miraculously we both were fine. As we got out of the Alouette the sudden cold and altitude started telling. Moreover we were in the normal coverall and simple shoes thus even few feet walk was tiring. We were not sure of our exact location and when we saw the troops coming towards us we thought that they were Indians and my captain asked me do you think they know any thing like Geneva Convention.

Lazawal- Alouette

Commanding Officer 5 Army Aviation Squadron Lieutenant Colonel Kamal Khan had gone to see the site of Captain Nasir Zaidi crashed helicopter to inquire into the circumstances that caused it and to make sure that it is not repeated again. After having done so, he took off from crash site between Rear Saddle and Lazawal-II with three passengers on board.

One minute after the takeoff a loud thud was heard, which jolted the helicopter, and then it progressively started losing height and could not sustain a level flight. There was a big boulder about 50 feet high in the flight path. In order to avoid this he pulled the cyclic back, though the helicopter cleared the boulder but could not sustain the flight any more and after skidding through some distance it finally toppled over to the left and came to a halt. The helicopter was completely damaged with no major injuries to the crew or passengers on board.

Allah Din { Lama No. 2677 } 26th August 1986

On 26th August 1986, Major Naqvi and Majors Shah Nawaz Badar were detailed for an ammunition dumping mission in Dansum area in Siachen. They took off from Kurmading

around 1130 hours and gave one drop of artillery ammunition at Allahdin Post, which is located at 5300 Meters. After about half an hour this crew made another attempt but had to turn back due to weather. At about 1345 hours the crew made another attempt and on reaching the Allahdin Post found tail wind in the only available direction. The pilot started the approach in tail wind and as they neared the helicopter pad the pilot felt rapid sink. It was a steep approach with no forward speed. The pilot tried to maneuver the helicopter towards left to clear the helipad while doing so the main rotors engaged the boulders on the slope of the ridge followed by fuselage hitting and rotating anti clock wise The helicopter had crashed about 50 meters north west and 100 feet lower than the helipad on the mountain slope. Luckily both pilots survived

Ambush Post 23rd March 1987{ Lama No. 2676}

On 23rd March 1987, Lama helicopter No 2676 piloted by Major Azhar Akbar and Major Muhammad Iqbal {both course mates} was detailed on a mission in Gyong Valley, Dansum Sector for the evacuation of two dead bodies and to look for a party of 4 Sind Regiment which was not traceable for over nine hours between Ambush Post and Camp-I. The pilot after a short time spotted a party of men walking on the glacier and they decided to land there to confirm whether they are the same lost troops and further more realizing that such a long exposure on glacier may warrant some help. The place of landing was very restricted where the Lama helicopter could barely fit in. The spot of landing was sloping forward with a telephone wire hardly 65-10 feet from the rotor top. The party was tied with a rope as per the SOP while moving on the Glacier, the distance between each individual soldier was approx 20-25 feet.

On approaching the helicopter all the four individuals wanted to be evacuated simultaneously so each wanted to get in first. Two of them rushed in the helicopter while the other two were forcing their way in when the helicopter started creeping forward on the slope. Because of the telephone wire in close proximity the helicopter was abruptly picked up by Major Iqbal without informing the captain, with two individuals inside the helicopter and two hanging out side all tied with the same rope. This take off led to an abrupt change of centre of gravity both laterally and longitudinally, the nose altitude exceeded beyond permissible limits and the bank to the left further aggravated, finally resulting into a crash on the glacier resulting in the destruction of helicopter and loss of two lives (individuals hanging out side).

Saddle - Lama No 2678 11th April 1987

Lama helicopter No 2678 piloted by Major Safdar and Major Ifzal of 8 Army Aviation Squadron was on a routine dumping mission in Baltoro Sector. This helicopter had already made two trips to the Conway Saddle and on the third trip it was safely loaded with 1490 Kg of all up weight and had a out of ground effect margin of 140 Kg.

On reaching the Conway Saddle at 6050 meters an approach was initiated by Maj Safdar from south easterly direction. Once on finals Major Safdar realized that the rate of

closure was faster than normal so he lowered the collective pitch slightly to control the speed. This act resulted into a higher rate of descend and the co-pilot told his captain that the helicopter is sinking so he must go around.

The captain of the helicopter initiated a go around at a time when helicopter had started sinking. The correction applied did not have any effect on the helicopter and it hit the ground uncontrollably. The helicopter engine kept running after the impact. Major Ifzal switched off the engine after about 2 minutes of vacating the helicopter. The helicopter was completely destroyed.

In the other helicopter following them were Major Javaid and Captain Sehgal and he {Sehgal}narrates” It was my first day in Siachin glacier,in the morning myself and Major Javaid had landed at Skardu in a PIA flight,as we were still in the aircraft when captain of PIA announced that Army Aviators to please report to ground staff.Later we met Major Safdar and Captain Ifzal who were waiting for arrival they told us to change into coverall immediately which we did in a corner of airport and then started the helicopter and started following the leader for the dumping mission. At Saddle I saw the lead helicopter going down and then saw them alive,later Major Javaid got Major Safdar and Captain Ifzal onboard,the takeoff was very marginal and I think I took my first breath when we got airborne. That was my first day on Siachin

Dansum Alouette No.1953,24th February 1988

On 24th February 1988 Alouette-III helicopter No 1953 piloted by Major Ijaz Haider Zaidi and Captain Waqar Baig was on an operational mission in Dansum Sector. After completing the mission the pilots refueled the helicopter at Dansum and got ready to takeoff with five persons on board (3x crew persons and 2 x passengers).

The helicopter took off in a very gentle headwind and it was checked during hovering twice before it gained a height of 200-300 feet. Suddenly the pilot noticed RPM fluctuation but there was no change in engine noise. On seeing this the pilot increased the collective pitch from 0.85 to 1.0, moments after which the needles split and loss of power was experienced. The pilot immediately executed an autorotation, which was not successful due to high altitude 9140-feet. and type of terrain at the accident site. All occupants of the helicopter died instantly except the Crew Chief Havildar Riasat who jumped out during the autorotation and sustained minor injuries.

Gyari- Lama No. 2683

Lama helicopter No 2683 piloted by Major Shakeel and Captain Nadeem was on a routine dumping mission in Dansum Sector. After about 3:20 hours of flying they picked up some load from Goma helipad and set course for Gyari. Captain Nadeem who was on his second tenure in Northern area was on the controls.

At Gyari helipad the pilot initiated the approach which was high and over shooting. Close to the helipad the pilot realized that the aircraft was too high and the rate of descend

was already fast. He came on the controls and tried to avoid sink by applying the available power but he could not check the sink because of high altitude and the fact that the ac was overloaded. Its all up weight was in excess by 30 kilograms, however the captain managed to avoid the live ammunition/explosives, fuel and other material placed around the helipad by drifting to left. The helicopter made contact with the ground with nose high attitude and the main rotors chopped off the tail rotor and tail boom. The ac was completely destroyed but the pilots sustained only minor injuries.

Bashu -Puma No.1988,31st July 1988

On 31st July 1988 Puma helicopter No 1406 piloted by Lieutenant Colonel Sajid Islam and Major Khalid Akhtar (co-pilot) of 25 Army Aviation Squadron took off at 1230 hours from Qasim for Gilgit. The helicopter arrived at Gilgit 1450 hours. After refueling at Gilgit the helicopter departed for Skardu at 1630 hours. The mission was to replace the Puma helicopter already stationed at Skardu which had become due for periodic inspection. Other than pilot and co-pilot the following six persons were on board:-

Subedar Muhammad Rafique Flight Engineer

Havildar Abdul Haq Crew Chief

Havildar Muhammad Arshad

Havildar Zahoor Ahmed

Havildar Muhammad Yousaf

Havildar Liaqat Ali

After thirty minutes of flight en route to Skardu when the helicopter arrived near village Bashu, Lieutenant Colonel Sajid observed abnormal noise from the engine compartment and sensed unusual smell, also oil was detected leaking from the right engine and the crew experienced failure of right engine. The most probable cause to which failure of right engine can be attributed is the failure of rear bearing of axial compressor.

Upon encountering the emergency the pilot decided to make immediate landing close to village Bashu located at an altitude of 2000 meters. He initiated the approach for landing, the landing pattern and approach was as per teaching. With single engine he could not check the rate of descent and the helicopter contacted the ground with severe impact and bounced 20-25 feet off the ground, this opened the passengers door and two passengers namely Arshad and Zahoor were thrown out of the helicopter further more the impact broke the neck of a full oxygen cylinder{large size} and caught fire. Puma Captain Lieutenant Colonel Sajid Islam true to old tradition remained seated on his seat and ordered the rest of crew to jump out. Co- pilot Major Akhtar and crew chief Havildar Khaliq jumped out from Puma engulfed in flames while Colonel Sajid died on his seat with his hands gripping the cyclic control along with flight engineer Subedar Muhammad Rafique. Havildar Muhammad Yousaf and Havildar Liaqat Ali died on the spot. Co-Pilot Major Khalid Akhtar and crew chief Havildar Abdul Haq were seriously burnt as a result of post crash fire. They were evacuated to

Combined Military Hospital, Rawalpindi on the following day but they also succumbed to burn injuries and died a fortnight after the crash. Persons who were thrown out of the helicopter received minor injuries and survived

Dansum Lama No.2690 7th August 1989.

On 7th August 1989, Lama helicopter No 2690 piloted by Major Ahmed Nehal Jafri with Captain Wasem Malik as the co pilot was on a recce mission from Dansum to Yasin Post. After starting the helicopter, pilot picked it up to hover at a slightly higher altitude due to dusty helipad. After carrying out routine pre-take off checks he initiated the take off. As soon as the helicopter moved forward, severe yawing movement was experienced coupled with loss of power and abnormal engine noise. Helicopter started losing height. Pilot applied collective to arrest the descent but there was no response and helicopter crash-landed in a close by Nullah. Both pilots survived

Saddle Again - Lama No. 2693 - 13th March 1991

On 13th March 1991, Lama helicopter No 2693 piloted by Captain Pervaiz Mahmood Butt and Captain Shahid Ahmed Gulzar, flew to Conway Saddle (Baltoro Sector) for a casualty evacuation mission. While putting down the helicopter on the snow covered helipad, it developed severe ground resonance. Pilot Captain Butt immediately picked up the helicopter to hover and initiated a right paddle turn to take off for International Himalayan Expedition Camp. During the process the helicopter sank abruptly with a pronounced unusual engine noise which resulted into an uncontrolled hard landing on the helipad. Pilots immediately switched off the helicopter by adopting the emergency switching off procedure to avoid any fire hazard. Crew escaped unhurt, however, both shock struts, rear tube and skids of helicopter were damaged. Although the helicopter had sustained minor damage, yet due to high altitude (6050m) and extreme weather conditions, it was not technically possible to rectify/repair it at Conway Saddle. It was, therefore, stripped and retrieved in parts except the canopy and centre structure which got buried under the snow in the process.

Colonel Pervaiz Butt recalled that event” After the accident we came out of the helicopter and by this time the troops also arrived. The radio sets of the helicopter were working so I gave the call to Major Mahmood who was in the other helicopter at the base camp, to which he asked when are you coming?. I had to tell him that we have crashed, he evacuated us in few minutes and also evacuated the casualty. Next day our Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Safdar and General Officer Commanding Army Aviation Major General Rahmat also arrived to visit the accident site. General made me fly the helicopter and sat with us he also remained at Saddle Top for over two hours. Simultaneously salvage operation started in which two crew chiefs were heli- lifted to the Saddle where they took all that was possible in a day. Next day weather turned bad and when after five days we went back to the top there was no sign of the helicopter. The Post told us that they had erected a 8 feet bamboo for signposting but now there is no sign of both, which sunk under the snow.

Arif Post- Lama No. 2673, 21st March 1992

Sepoy Wali Muhammad of 5 Northern Light Infantry {NLI} Battalion, stationed at Arif Post developed sickness during early days of March 1992. His condition became critical by 15 March and he expired on 18 March 1992 at 0700 hours. Arif Post is located in Piun Sector at an altitude of 19,300 feet. It is a ridge line with a almost razor sharp edge and the post has been created by improvement of the ridge line and making small living bunkers for 5-6 men and two small bunkers for machine guns. The sick Jawan could not be evacuated because of the difficult climb of over 70 degree through rope ladders anchored in snow. The climb at that altitude in an exhausting experience and the descend via the same ladders is an equally difficult task. It is almost impossible for a party of men to carry a sick man down on the rope ladders. Therefore the only alternative to recover the dead body was through a helicopter mission. The mission was passed to Lama Flight Commander after necessary coordination and approval. In his briefing, he categorically mentioned to the flight commander that the mission may be aborted if any kind of hazard exists on the newly prepared helipad. The Lama Flight Commander detailed two Lama helis to undertake this mission, Lama 2673 with Major Tahir Ali and Captain Nawaz and Lama No 2689 with Major Aman Ullah and Captain Anjum Enayat as the crew. Major Syed Tahir Ali was on his 4th tenure and Captain Muhammad Nawaz was on his first tenure in northern area.

The mission was undertaken on 21st March 1992 owing to bad weather in Piun Sector on 19th and 20th March 1992. Major Syed Tahir Ali, the leader, was briefed at Piun by Acting Commanding Officer, 5 NLI Battalion, Major Abdul Matin Afridi. In spite of the fact that neither Major Matin had ever visited Arif Post himself, nor he was in direct communication with the post, and neither he was conveyed the dimensions of helicopter pad by the officer on the post

The helicopters arrived in the Arif Post area at 1115 hour and carried out high reconnaissance by making one left hand orbit remaining South of the ridge line and approximately 100 feet above the helipad surface. In the second orbit the mission leader gave a call to his no-2 announcing his intention to break off and go in for a landing while the No 2 continued to orbit over head. After crossing the ridge line from east of helipad. Major Tahir Ali made a slow controlled approach from north-east and seemed to pause for a moment just short of entering the helipad. He placed the helicopter left of the 3 feet x 3 feet letter 'H' in an effort to accommodate his rotor disc in the marginal clearance available. At this stage the main rotor blade tips were passing only 1 ½ to 2 feet from the boulder. The sequence of events occurring this moment onwards happened in quick succession. The snow under the heels which were right on the edge of the helipad gave away when the pilot unloaded the rotors partially. The Lama's tail boom rocked backwards over the 2000 feet fall on the northern edge of helipad. The pilot instinctively moved the cycle forward to counter this unexpected sudden situation. As a consequence, the helicopter skidded forward 1-2 feet on its toes. As a secondary measure this remedial action was aided by the pilot by giving slight collective. The helicopter broke ground and while doing so, the, main rotor engaged the

boulder on the West which was obscured from pilots view after entering the helipad. As a result the tail boom, swinging left, hit the same boulder.

The helicopter after being destabilized cleared the helipad and started an uncontrolled right spiraling descend. It hit the mountain slope 60-70 meters below the helipad and continued downwards accompanied by an avalanche. It finally fell on its left side in the glacier down below. Both the pilots Major Tahir Ali and Captain Nawaz expired due to injuries received in two thousand feet fall.

Eggs For Saddle Lama No.2678 14th May 1993

On 14th May 1993 two Lama helicopters were on a routine dumping mission to Baltoro Sector. Helicopter No 2678 which was piloted by Major Nadeem Khattak and Captain Khusro, picked up a sling load of 60 kg from IHEC well within its permissible weight limits.

The helicopter initiated the approach in 6-8 Knots of tail wind with no turbulence or up/down drafts. The pilots did not observe any abnormality or change in engine noise till it reached short finals. When the Lama was only 20 meters high about 50 meters short of helipad, suddenly the pilots experienced an unusual feeling of sink. Although at an altitude of 6000 meters there was not much of collective pitch margin available to the pilot but still he tried his best to control the last sink by using maximum permissible collective pitch. The helicopter did not respond to any of the actions done by the pilot and hit the ground cutting its tail pylon. The helicopter sustained substantial damage where as the pilots escaped unhurt. Later the helicopter sank and got buried under the snow.

Lieutenant Colonel Khusro Habib narrates the accident "It was my first mission in the area, we had to pick up the sling load of igloos for the Conway Saddle from the IHEC. The problem was that pieces of load were not in conformity to our load table. We wanted to take the maximum load allowed to the peak thus we attached the 60 kg piece with us, we also had boiled eggs for the post as a gift from the Lama Flight. In addition there was a casualty waiting for the evacuation. After the crash in which helicopter got toppled and I was on the upper side, it was with great difficulty that we came out of the helicopter and felt the lack of oxygen. By this time soldiers also joined us from the post and took us inside and offered us tea and cigarettes, the most worried person was the casualty who thought that now he would be left at the post but I assured him that he would be the first one to go down which he did. Last but not the least the eggs were handed over to the post, unbroken".

Gultri, Lama No.2691, 23rd September 1995

On 23rd September 1995 Major Ibrar and Major Amir Ayub were on reconnaissance mission from Dumba Bhao to Gultri. At 4600 Meters abeam Gultri the helicopter experienced severe jerk coupled with a loud noise. Lama descended at high speed and close to the ground the pilot raised the attitude of the Lama to reduce speed. Major Ibrar and crew chief received

minor injuries where as Major Amir Ayub was seriously injured. Both the pilots remained hospitalized for a prolonged period and by the grace of Allah both are now Lieutenant Colonel s.

KARGIL

Kargil is a small mountainous town located in occupied Kashmir on Indian National Highway No 1; which links and sustains Indian troops deployed at Siachin. This town is close to the Line Of Control {LOC}. On a clear day Indian military traffic passing along it, can be sniped from any one of the innumerable, nameless mountain peaks which are between 15000-18000 thousand feet high. Indian troops used to occupy these in summers and vacate them in winters. Kargil is the neck of all Indian forces deployed in the head, that is Siachin. If neck can be choked, than 30,000 Indian forces in the head will suffocate.

Kargil and the 1948 Campaign

Kargil was first occupied by Gilgit Scouts under Major Aslam in May 1948. The 250 men Eskimo Force led by Second Lieutenant Sher Khan, started from Chilam on 1st May 1948 crossing Burzil, encountering snow blizzards, frost bites, wading through fifteen feet of snow they reached Gultri after covering sixty miles on 3rd May 1948. Gultri is the mid point between Burzil and Kargil. On the night of 9/10 May 1948, platoon size dawn attacks captured Dras and Kargil. Indians later took-back the towns in November 1948.

VIOLENT KASHMIR 1989-2004

In February 1989 a public uprising took place in Srinagar and in other parts of Kashmir²¹⁶, this was similar to Solidarity at Gdansk or the Pakistan National Alliance agitation of 1977. At the dawn of last decade of the millennium the chain of events brought a new twist to the Kashmir issue. Benazir Bhutto the first female premier of Islamic world was politically threatened by the religious groups, fundamentalist and military all who have been nourished in the decade of Wahhabis theology as propagated by Zia, thus Benazir had little option but to adopt a tough attitude as adopted by her father. The political and military culture of Pakistan therefore remained at clash under Benazir. Pakistan especially the Gujranwala and Lahore Divisions became a hub of training grounds for young men to go and fight in Kashmir.

Line Of Control {LOC}

²¹⁶ <http://www.parliament.uk/documents/commons/lib/research/rp2004/> Kashmir Research Paper 30th March 2004. {accessed on 15th December 2010.}

LOC was accepted as a kind of working boundry in Simla accord of 1972. LOC divides Kashmir in a treacherous manner, following innumerable rivers, ravines, spurs, saddles, peaks, passes and mountain hamlets across tree and snow line area. In various sectors like Kargil, it is so close that at times Pakistani and Indian troops often resort to verbal assault if not engaged in firing and shelling. Pakistani line of communication also runs precariously close to the Indian observation and vulnerable to shelling especially on clear days. In winter when snow blocks almost all vehicular traffic then only Army Aviation sustains the troops deployed in the area. In summers aviation choppers fly almost daily to carry out the dumping of rations, critical ammunition and supplies sometimes amidst enemy fire. Lieutenant General {retired} Ali Kuli Khan, himself a veteran chopper pilot, who was the Commander 10 Corps in 1995-96 exploited the situation with his back ground of aviation experience, highlights the Kargil aspect *“When Indian started shelling our troops in Neelum Valley then I started looking at other areas where I could settle the score with them and Kargil was a natural choice from where over the heights we could fire upon their convoys moving up North, Thus we moved special weapons to these peaks with the help of Army Aviation which rendered their movement difficult for considerable time”*.

Induction of MI-17 Helicopters in Northern Area

To sustain a major operation in these far flung mountains required mammoth amount of food, fodder, ammunition, weapons, shifting of troops to the posts and their eventual survival. To accomplish all this, new roads had to be constructed to increase capacity and density of wheeled and hoofed transport. Army Aviation was the only answer, as it could reach and land at any place from Gilgit within an hour which would have taken at least weeks for any other means of transport.

In the summer of 1996, MI-17 helicopters were inducted in Army Aviation. After assessing the performance of MI-17 helicopters in Azad Kashmir area these machines were flown to Gilgit on 22nd June 1996 for the advance phase of mountain/high altitude flying. Initially pilots were familiarized with the surrounding valleys of Gilgit. On 26th June 1996, loaded operations were undertaken in 80 Brigade area successfully. There after flight moved to Skardu on 29th June 1996. On 1st July 1996 a successful landing was made at International Himalayan Expedition Camp, IHEC {5050 meters} in Baltoro Sector by Lieutenant Colonel Tughrul Bashir and Lieutenant Colonel Niazi. This historic landing was the highest ever landing undertaken on a twin engine helicopter in Pakistan. It changed the complexion of helicopter warfare supporting these far flung and remote areas. Now MI-17 in one sortie could haul the load equivalent to 10 sorties of Lama in the sector. Subsequently MI-17 helicopters were flown to 323 Brigade area for the approving missions of existing helipads as well as the performance of the helicopters. On 4th July 1996, the flight came back to Qasim Base after successful completion of the mission and induction of MI-17 helicopters in Azad Kashmir and Northern Areas, after having flown 136.5 hours in the process. Pioneer crew included, Lieutenant Colonel Tughrul Bashir, Major Nasir Iftikhar, Major Naveed Akbar, Major Jehangir Bhatti, Major Ihsan-Ul-Haq, Captain Naeem Masood Khan, Captain Jehanzeb, and Captain. Murtaza Saleem.

Shifting of Guns to Shaqma

After the conduct of successful operations in all the sectors, Headquarters FCNA planned to shift 130mm guns to Shaqma and Olding Sector. The weight of one gun was approximately 7500 kgs. Due to non existent tracks the only viable way was through helicopters. It was indeed a challenging task given to 27 Army Aviation Squadron to shift such heavy artillery pieces to the heights ranging from 3200 meters to 3400 meters during summer season.

Crew reached Skardu on 25th July 1996 and after necessary coordination with FCNA and 62 Brigade the mission was planned for the transportation of 130mm guns. The guns were disassembled at Skardu and first sortie took lighter parts of the gun to Phulto Kush to check the behavior of the helicopter as well as to check the condition of the helipad. The helipad was located in a narrow valley allowing only one sided approach. First barrel was shifted to Phulto Kush on 31st July, One Lama of 8 Army Aviation Squadron was also detailed with MI-17 to give exact and latest wind condition at Phultu Kush helipad. By the grace of Allah first mission of shifting of 3x 130mm guns to Shaqma Sector was completed. Major Nasir Iftikhar and Captain Naeem Masood Khan followed the same procedure for shifting of guns to Olding Sector. As the mission was of extreme importance and shifting of barrels was to be expedited due to operational reasons hence Lieutenant Colonel Zafar Niazi and Lieutenant Colonel Tariq Khan brought another MI-17 to Skardu and the mission was successfully completed on 26th August 1996.

Skardu Aviation Base

In October 1997,Skardu Aviaton Base was raised with Colonel Khalid as the commander and Major Daud as the only Staff Officer.It had following assets.

Lama Flight (Skardu) 4xLamas: 1xAlouette-III :

Puma Flight (Gilgit) 1xPuma:

MI-17 Flight. 2-3 MI-17 helicopters at Skardu.

More Guns

Heavy guns hold the key to any successful venture in mountainous area and they had to be positioned close enough to the LOC in this period to make best use of their range.MI-17 had lifted a heavy piece of Artillery weighting 2300 kgs at a height of 3500 meters in August 1996, making two new guns positions of 130 mm guns at Naram and Camp 2,thus bringing Indian main dumping station and airfield at Kargil under engagement. FCNA later planned to shift artillery guns to different sectors. The weight of one gun was approximately 7500kilograms.MI-17s proved equal to the task and 1x 57mm,15 x 105 mm and 43 x 130 mm guns along with crew and ammonition, defence stores, troops, overhead protection, engineers stores etc were successfully transported to the desired locations.

Dozer across Burzil

One dozer was required by the engineers for the improvement of track in Shaqma Sector. Shifting of the said dozer was not possible by road due to snow bound areas en route. The only possibility left to shift the dozer was through heli lifting by MI-17 helicopters. The mission was assigned to MI-17 Flight Skardu during 1st week of May 1997. The job assigned was challenging and demanding, therefore detailed preparation were required. After desired deliberation, it was recommended to Headquarters FCNA that the said dozer be stripped in parts prior to shifting. On 15th May 1997 the shifting of dozer to Dheri started and the mission was completed on 11th June 1997. Major Naveed Akbar and Major Warraich were the crew members and flew a total of 17.4 hours in this mission

Recce & Secrecy

During winters of 1998 Indians had vacated the posts overlooking Kargil. This was detected and confirmed by own aviation elements who operate in this area freely. Pilots of 8 Army Aviation Squadron later undertook operational recce and peep through missions along and across LOC. Pilots not caring for their lives carried out these sorties right under the watchful and hostile eyes of Indians. Major Khalid Rana was one such Lama pilot. “*Reconnaissance and surveillance missions by helicopters were also undertaken in other sub sector as per routine activity.*” Due to this factor secrecy of the operation was maintained till first week of May 1999. Secrecy was the hallmark of this operation so much so that even the Qasim Base commander and commanding officers of aviation squadron were not in picture of the whole affair and neither were the pilots.

PEACE TALKS

India conducted three nuclear explosions and days later Pakistan conducted five, June 1998 thus became a very hot month in sub continent. Pakistani generals were quick to put into use this security umbrella of nuclear warheads, they can now plan and execute the plans that have been discussed and debated in many uncountable war games, the previous fear of operating under the threat of Indian nukes was now over, again the Aryan culture came at par with Dravidian. Indian generals should have tried to capture or capitulate AJK when they had the nuclear hegemony.

In February 1999 Nawaz Sharif premier of Pakistan himself a Kashmiri by origin and having one of the biggest ever mandate of public in history of Pakistan and Atal Behari Vajpayi premier of India met at Lahore and agreed that their respective Governments:

21 FEBRUARY 1999. LAHORE DECLARATION

The Prime Ministers of the Republic of India and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan: Sharing a vision of peace and stability between their countries, and of progress and

prosperity for their peoples; Convinced that durable peace and development of harmonious relations and friendly cooperation will serve the vital interests of the peoples of the two countries, enabling them to devote their energies for a better future; Recognising that the nuclear dimension of the security environment of the two countries adds to their responsibility for avoidance of conflict between the two countries; Committed to the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and the universally accepted principles of peaceful co- existence; Reiterating the determination of both countries to implementing the Simla Agreement in letter and spirit; Committed to the objective of universal nuclear disarmament and non-proliferation; Convinced of the importance of mutually agreed confidence building measures for improving the security environment; Recalling their agreement of 23rd September, 1998, that an environment of peace and security is in the supreme national interest of both sides and that the resolution of all outstanding issues, including Jammu and Kashmir, is essential for this purpose; Have agreed that their respective Governments:

- shall intensify their efforts to resolve all issues, including the issue of Jammu and Kashmir.
- shall refrain from intervention and interference in each other's internal affairs.
- shall intensify their composite and integrated dialogue process for an early and positive outcome of the agreed bilateral agenda.
- shall take immediate steps for reducing the risk of accidental or unauthorised use of nuclear weapons and discuss concepts and doctrines with a view to elaborating measures for confidence building in the nuclear and conventional fields, aimed at prevention of conflict.
- reaffirm their commitment to the goals and objectives of SAARC and to concert their efforts towards the realisation of the SAARC vision for the year 2000 and beyond with a view to promoting the welfare of the peoples of South Asia and to improve their quality of life through accelerated economic growth, social progress and cultural development.
- reaffirm their condemnation of terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and their determination to combat this menace.
- shall promote and protect all human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Signed at Lahore on the 21st day of February 1999.

Atal Behari Vajpayee Prime Minister of the Republic of India Muhammad Nawaz

Sharif Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.,²¹⁷

Operation Koh Paima

Pakistan Army under General Musharraf was actively planning the campaign to capture the strategic importance Kargil town in IHK. There is nothing wrong with the this

²¹⁷ Ibid,

approach if one looks through the historical prism ,a classic Kautaliyan approach, a touch of Bismarck in planning, it was an accidental war, Pakistan army units lost Siachen because they vacated their posts in winter and now same was being practiced by the Indians in Kargil sector which is much lower in altitude, so like Indians the Pakistan backed Kashmiri militants occupied their vacant heights. this brought two countries to the brink of a war but credit goes to Indians for acting in a mature manner by restricting the conflict to Kashmir itself and even in that only Kargil sector was focussed. It was a god given opportunity for Indians to knock out the Kashmiris militant camps within Pakistan, their 'sanctuaries of war'.²¹⁸ This high tension drama between two recently crowned nuclear powers with a millennium of hatred and mistrust finally were poised once again to the battle field without fully understanding the complications of nuclear holocaust especially it is more true for Pakistan as its military culture by this time became more aggressive.

It was re-enactment of First Kashmir War, now the militants like their predecessors tribesmen were raiding the Kashmir and hitting at the Indian military where they can and killing and burning the Hindus the way Muslims were burnt and killed in 1947.

Kargil operation is a replica of 1965 War especially the Operation Gibraltar. It was perceived in 1998 with more optimism that the on going violence and insurgency in Kashmir has reached the point where if Pakistan now attacks the LOC then the popular uprising will engulf the Indian Army deployed in Kashmir. Another aspect of the operation from military aspect was the feasibility of success, all Pakistan had to do was to cut the lone highway and victory was there. In 1965 similar approach was carried out when the highway at Akhnoor was the target. The major difference from the 1965 was in the terrain , where as in the past the terrain was flat and allowed the employment of armoured , it restricts the operation to foot soldiers in Kargil. Other than this the tactics and Scarlet Thread remained the same.

On political spectrum where as in 1965 the military and politics were in the hand of a single person that is Field Marshall Ayub Khan in 1999 the political control of the country was in the hand of Nawaz Shariff who was riding the wave of popularity after his nuclear explosions. Militarily Pakistan was equally strong in 1999 as it was in 1965, in the past Pakistan had the edge over the India in terms of quality of weapons by virtue of F – 104 and Sabre aircraft apart from better armoured formations. Pakistan in 1965 had the fear of Indians over running it that is why the army top brass was reluctant to go for a war but Foreign Minister Bhutto was confident of a success. In 1999 the politicians were not in favour of a war and apparently neither they were in picture of the operation but the army top brass was confident this time of pulling the feat. The nuclear umbrella gave Pakistan Army the much needed psychological impetus of carrying out an independent operation without fear of a full-fledged war which even if it breaks out would be limited in nature due to nuclear threat.

Thus Kargil became an ideal battlefield for the army top brass. Just like in 1947 when accidentally the tribesmen created a window of opportunity for the Pakistan to carve a piece of Kashmir for herself, the Kargil also provided the similar opportunity. Kargil should be seen in the background of Aryan supremacy over the Dravidians, it was bound to happen

²¹⁸ Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema ,*Sanctuary And War*, {Quaid –i-Azam University 1978}foreward.

because Pakistan by nature is a militant country and since 1974 it had been rather coy due to the Indian nuclear threat but now with that threat removed it was bound to unleash the fury.

Army culture is difficult to understand, all over the world the army generals are prone to the glamour of victory, they carve the desire to be remembered in history as victors, for them the arrows on map are nothing more than symbols they seldom feel and hear the echoes of death. These generals have gone through that pain in their long journey of soldiering and it is purely luck that they have survived the day thus life and death attains a different meaning for senior officers. To them the equation is simple that if they have survived the battlefield then others will also do the same and those who will die will be dying for a cause.

In the winter of 1998, posts were vacated as per routine by the Indian troops due to cold and freedom fighters occupied them just before the return of the Indian troops. A bitter fight for the control of these heights started between the freedom fighters and the Indian Army. It was replica of Siachin conflict but this time Pakistan had turned the table on the India. India planned Operation Vijay to recapture the lost posts and Pakistan responded with operation Koh Paima, to maintain the integrity of LOC.

On 5th May 1999 the hostilities along the LOC turned into a Limited War between Pakistan and India. On this very day firing between Pakistani and Indian troops in Piun Sector took place. Indians employed over three divisions of infantry supported by three Bofors guns and almost seven squadrons of Indian Air Force. The continued presence of enemy air in this area resulted into frequent delay/cancellation of own aviation missions. After shooting down of Mig-21 and Mig-27 on 28th May, enemy aircraft activity subsided in crossing of LOC. The IAF subsequently adopted the technique of engaging the targets by remaining in their own area, which gave freedom of operation to own aviation helicopters to a great extent. Ground based air defence weapons did not pose any worthwhile threat to own aviation operations. However the activities were continuously monitored by the enemy radars deployed in support of this operation.

Role Of Army Aviation

Operation Koh Paima was supported by 8 Squadron{Lamas/Alouette-III}, 27 Squadron{MI-17} and 21 Squadron{Puma}. Helicopters were placed in Skardu and Gilgit respectively. Puma helicopters assisted the aviation support in this operation up to the limit of 14000 feet where as the mission above this altitude were undertaken by MI-17. Lama were used for missions close to the enemy. Daily flying during the operation was approx 6-7 hours per pilot. The major tasks according to priority were, replenishment of artillery ammunition to the forward gun positions, replenishment of critical supplies, casualty evacuation, command and liaison.

These missions were carried out under adverse environments. The locations of certain posts were such that own helicopters remained under hostile fire for certain duration of flight time. As the intensity of operation increased the logistic requirement of ground troops also

multiplied. Most critical requirement was the artillery ammunition, and it was heli lifted and then delivered to gun positions amidst falling Indian artillery shells.

Aviation Fuel was only abundantly available at Gilgit, Skardu, Jaglot and Astore. During the peak of operation when the aviation was being employed at intense rate, the requirement of fuel increased manifold which diverted some of aviation effort for the transportation of fuel to forward areas.

First Line Maintenance. This maintenance support was provided by the respective light aid detachments {LAD} of squadrons at Skardu and Gilgit. The dedicated effort of the LAD persons ensured the serviceability of helicopter as per the intended operational requirement. However in case of any component becoming unserviceable replacements were arranged from squadrons/EME battalions located at Qasim Base. The 25 and 50 hours inspections of Puma and Lama helicopters were regularly carried out by the LADs at Gilgit and Skardu which avoided the grounding of helicopters.

Pilots. All experienced MI-17 pilots were pooled at Skardu, in one instance Major Basharat Noor and Major Ikram who were on a routine squadron navigation flew from Turbat to Skardu in a single day. It was the same period when cyclone relief operation was also being undertaken simultaneously at Badin. PAF fighting Falcon F-16 were stationed at Skardu in anticipation of enemy air attack. Articulation of command was a major hurdle in aviation affairs, pilots were under various tiers of command which included Headquarters Aviation Command, Qasim Aviation Base, Skardu Aviation Base, 10 Corps, FCNA, Brigade Commanders, Commanding Officers and above all own Flight Commander.

The Aviation Hero Of Kargil

“Daud 19” the flying legend of Kargil arrived at Skardu on 4th June 1999 and by virtue of his experience and seniority took over the command of MI-17 Flight. The mission detailing was done by Major Daud Tariq latest by 2200-2330 hours. He in turn was given the tasks by Lieutenant Colonel Nasir Mian the aviation Grade-One Staff Officer of FCNA. After getting approval from the base commander, same was passed to the flight along with the weather forecast. There was no such facility available and civilian Ghulam Muhammad at Skardu Airfield has been forecasting weather for last 24 years on visual references. Weather was generally taken by the base from forward posts or from the brigade headquarters

On 9th June 1999, one such mission for carrying of artillery ammunition to Gultri Post was passed at 2330 hours. “Daud 19”, not only accepted the mission but keeping in view the hazards decided to go himself along with Captain Uzair. Before hitting the bed he rang Naib Subedar Khurshid in charge of light aid detachment to make ready the MI-17 # 58611 of 4 Squadron that had arrived at Skardu on 8th June. Havildar Shabbir Assi was detailed as the flight engineer and Havildar Bashir along with Naik Naseer were to act as the crew chief.

At 0345 Daud 19 and his co pilots got up from Gamba House amidst pile of pilots who were sleeping at what ever space there was. The mess staff made a hasty standard break fast of paratha and omelet. Captain Uzair since time immemorial has never missed his prayers. They reached the dispersal area which was a nullah and started the helicopter and

brought it to airfield and than got airborne at 0430.By the time sun rays reached Skardu, almost all the helicopters were airborne heading for various sectors.

At 1600 hours “Daud 19” landed at Gultri after dumping and sling operations.He shared the helipad with Puma, captained by Major Sabah ud Din,who had Commander FCNA with him for briefing and visit to the forward areas. Both pilots before taking off checked the weather,Puma had to go back to Gilgit and “Daud 19” to Skardu.

Brigadier Nusrat Sial the Commander of 62 Brigade,Captain Saeed Ahmed of 13 Northern Light Infantry,Captain Jamil Akhbar of 13 Azad Kashmir Regiment along with Subedar Nazir and Clerk Karim of same paltan,Gunner Abdul Rehan of 215 Medium Regiment were all to accompany Daud 19 to Skardu for varying reasons.

At 1700 hours Major Saqib Qayyum observed the first lightening and flash over the valley, simultaneously Major Daud Tariq and Colonel Khalid Mahmood all started inquiring about the where about of DAUD 19.Major Sabah ud Din who took off after Daud 19 decided to proceed back to Gultri as it was near impossible to fly ahead, he gave calls to Daud 19 but there was no response. Major Shahid Nazir who was in air while coming back from Piun was directed by ground staff to go and search Daud 19,but the entry to Deosai plains was blocked.

Wing Commander Bashir Ahmed of Pakistan Air Force had arrived at the Deosai plains at 1545 hours and within hours he made the radar operational. At 1730 hours when winds outside were lashing at 60/70 knots, he saw a slow moving helicopter on his radar screen, it took him some time to identify it from clutters of surrounding mountains. Soon the blip faded and last headed for the Skardu, having failed to locate the ground. At 2000 hours when weather became absolutely clear, he saw a fire burning on the top of a peak.

Next day weather remained bad and finally ground parties which were searching the missing Daud 19, located the wreckage, all souls on board had departed.

Major Hanif the legendry “DAUD 19” was awarded Sitara-I- Jurat for his commitment and dedication, Captain Uzair and Naik Aassi were bestowed with Tamgha-i-Basalat.The unpredictable weather did not give Major Hanif a chance even to turn back for safety.

Casualty Evacuation Missions

On 16th June 1999, when Operation Koh Paima was at its peak, team of two Lama helicopters were assigned task of evacuating 19 casualties from a post which was under enemy artillery and air attack. The post was so located that in order to approach it, the helicopter had to give forty seconds exposure to another enemy post. Furthermore it was like a bowl and helicopters had to make a rapid climb to 5200 meters and then descending to 4700 meters.Major Qaiser the mission leader had not even seen this post before. The two Lama helicopters inspite of all these odds made three trips to this post amidst enemy shelling and successfully evacuated all the casualties. This was the first msn of this type to this post. Later on many casualties were evacuated and dumping missions were carried out.

On 18th June 1999,another mission was assigned to evacuate a casualty with back bone injury. Keeping in view that in Lama laying casualty cannot be evacuated, but crew

Major Daud & Major Qaiser were determined to evacuate him, removed seats and wooden plank of about 5 ft was carried along. After landing at the post the casualty Major Wali was laid on the plank and placed inside the helicopter, the legs of Major Wali from knee onwards were out of chopper. Lama flew in this manner to Skardu. Later on Major Wali remained admitted in CMH for over one year. By the Grace of Allah Almighty Major Wali is walking now.

The Flying Hours generated by squadron are as under:-

Puma	-	536.3 Hours
Lama/Alouette	-	1835.6 Hours
MI-17	-	1823.1 Hours
Total	-	4261.0 “

The details of logistic support provided to the field formations are as under:-

Dumping	-	2,51,183.0 Kg
Persons Lifted	-	7037
Casualty Evacuated	-	882

‘Through the summer of 2000 the violence intensified between militants and the Indian security forces. Over 930 people died in the first six months of the year, including 36 Sikhmen in the village of Chithi Singh Pora, who were rounded up and shot by militants after being separated from the women of the village’ .²¹⁹

AFGHAN WAR 1978– 1989

Afghanistan has an area that equals to that of France, Holland, Belgium and Denmark combined or it is five times bigger than Vietnam, it had a population of 17 million in 1979, which is 99% Muslim {90% Sunni, 10 % Shia} and 85% of this population lived in rural area having a literacy rate of 10%, there are no railways in Afghanistan, 80% of area is mountainous, it had 19000 kilometres of road out of which only 25% was paved. Afghanistan shares a 2,348 Kilometres of border with Russia on west and north, 2,180 Kilometres with Pakistan on east, 820 kilometres with Iran in south and 73 Kilometres with China in north²²⁰

²¹⁹ *Parliament Papers*,p 20

²²⁰ Lester Grauand,MichaelGress ,eds, *The Soviet Afghan War, How a superpower fought and lost a war*{,Kansas university press,2002},p,1-5

In April 1978 the Russian backed left wing coup in Afghanistan resulted in a wide spread social reforms that included education of women as well, soon the tribal society took up arms as it was against their customs. By 1979 the rebels had captured major town and even regular Afghan army started defecting, in line with 'Brezhnev doctrine' the Russian army came into Afghanistan on the request of state.

Soviet Union

Russian 40th army with a strength of 81,800 troops having two motorized divisions, one airborne division, one air assault brigade, two motorised regiments, under the name of Limited Contingent of Soviet Forces{LCOS} all in all having over hundred combat units supported by requisite number of aircraft and gunships²²¹ crossed over the international border at 1200 GMT 25th December 1979 and was in position by mid January 1980, Its primary aim was to relieve the Afghan army of garrison duties and to push them and support them in fighting the insurgency.

Great Game; Final Round

With the military coup in Afghanistan {27th April 1978} the final round of Great Game started. In August 1978, General Zia decided that conditions in the tribal areas are favourable for the pursuance of Forward Policy. In December 1978 Afghanistan signed a peace pact with Russians. In February 1979 The Iranian Revolution took place and Shah of Iran had to flee the country. In April 1979 the American offer of aid was rejected by the President Zia as 'peanut'. The threat of Russia which was perceived almost 150 years ago and around which all the subsequent events including Anglo – Afghan Wars took place now became a reality, Great Game was not a fantasy game it was a real game and stakes were high.

Forward Thrust

Pakistan's response 'It was therefore decided to move up to the border in those areas which would be of military significance...we have moved forward in over a dozen areas the most significant of these areas are Nawa Pass, Kaitu Valley and Danday Saidgi'²²². As a first step it was decided to occupy the approaches that lead from Afghanistan into North Waziristan. Much has been done under the British regarding establishing of posts and picquets and later under Brigadier NaseerUlah Babar the 'Forward Push' has been quite effective still there were many areas which needed attention. The only worthwhile change in post 1971 era from the past was the occupation of Ghulam Hasan Khan. On the military side the raising of Corps headquarters at Peshawar, infantry division at Kohat, infantry brigade at Thal on Kurram provided the necessary military support.

Frontier Corps own appreciation highlighted the importance of area Saidgi south of Ghulam Hasan Khan. Thus within Tochi Scouts area of responsibility Saidgi became

²²¹ Ibid p.17-18

²²² Lieutenant General Governor NWFP, FazleHaq's remarks, in foreword of Forward Thrust, a secret document of 1980, Frontier Corps NWFP.

important 'A strong mobile force can rush into Tochi Valley quite unhindered',²²³. On 2nd July 1978 the Frontier Corps appreciation of the frontier was approved by the Chief Martial Law Administrator in a high level meeting at Rawalpindi.

Saidgi

On 25th July 1978 the very first reconnaissance party comprising of Commandant Lieutenant Colonel Muhammad Akram Khan, Political Agent Muhammad Rafiq Afridi and Adjutant Major Rahim Zad Khan went to Saidgi and they selected an area {Pt 4688} for a company strength occupation. It was again reconnaissance on 8th August by the adjutant and Captain Zia Seraj. The very first attack on the Afghan territory was launched in the June 1978 from here by the tribes on the Afghan Lalezai Post. In retaliation the Afghan forces with mobile elements gathered at the border and shelled the Saidgi. This incident had a much more impact than mere shelling. It brought the tribes to a sense of reality; no more they could stop a tank or an armoured car with their old fashioned, out dated rifles

On 14th September two companies of Tochi scouts were deployed at Danday Plains in connection with the decision of political agent, the tribes concerned were Darpa Khel Daur and Bora Khel having a dispute over the land

On 5th November 1978, Tochi Scouts had the honour to take an Army reconnaissance party through Kaitu River and went upto the Durand Line. The purpose of the party was to reconnoitre the main approaches from Afghanistan. It was the first time that the Durand Line had been approached in this Valley. {Kaitu Valley}. Commander Corps Engineers {Brigadier Waheed}, Commander 117 Infantry Brigade, brigade major and few officers from the brigade comprised of the party. From Tochi Scouts, the commandant, adjutant and two wing commanders {Major Imtiaz Ahmed, Major Mushtaq Ahmed} made the contingent. 'It was a great success as the move of the party went through the river uninterrupted from the locals and was received with lavish tea at various places by the locals',²²⁴. The traditional migration of Powindahs took place as usual in winter but instead of going back they preferred to stay here

Through the efforts of the political agents the Wazirs were convinced and after extracting an agreement useful to them they consented. On 18th April 1979 Tochi Scouts occupied Danday and Saidgi heights in a well-planned dawn operation. Both shoulders of the defile on the Durand Line were occupied and picquets established to monitor the whole valley area in order to block the main approaches from Afghanistan. The task of occupation in the area was completed before the target time given by Inspector General Frontier Corps. Temporary accommodation was constructed on self help basis for over two companies strength in about six weeks time. The commendable task was the construction of road {4 Miles} from Saidgi Village to Sassai Top which is at the height of 5298 feet. It was constructed on self help basis in a record time of three weeks. 'Miran Shah and indeed the Lower Tochi Valley are now well guarded from any land based incursion',²²⁵ was the opinion

²²³ The Forward Thrust, First Report, Frontier Corps, NWFP, January 1980. {Declassified Document, original classification, Secret}

²²⁴ Digest of Service, Tochi Scouts.

²²⁵ Forward Thrust, p -13.

of higher headquarters. On the organisational aspect the Kohistan Scouts which were deployed in the rear were move forward and they occupied the Spinwam Fort and carrying out duties of road protection which the Tochi scouts wing was performing thus relieving the wing for occupation of Saidgi.

Kaitu Valley

Kaitu River.rises in Afghanistan on the South West border of Khost. Above Spinwam, Its valley is broad and cultivated. Leaving Spinwam, it winds through narrow gorges to its junction with the Kurram River at Zarwam. The total length in North Waziristan area being about 30 miles. It is an important pass and Nadir Shah used it during the 1919 attack on North Waziristan, it is also known as Shamal. Spinwam is on the northern bank of Kaitu and the 24 kilometres approach from the Durand Line on a shingle track remains unprotected. It was decided to strengthen this approach. Kaitu valley is inhabited by a number of Wazir Tribes among which Hassan Khel, Dreplari and Titi Madda Khel are more important. ‘After many lengthy and tedious parleys the tribes concerned agreed to the extension of a road on the left bank of Kaitu River’²²⁶. Within four months the road was constructed to some extent. In a joint operation by the Tochi Scouts {No.5 Wing} and Kohistan Scouts on 13th November 1979the heights on the Kaitu at Durand Line were secured. The political up-heavel from the tribes was pacified by the governor in a Jirga that was held six days after the occupation of the Kaitu.

Niaz Ali Khan

Niaz Ali Khan controlled the Gurweikht territory and without his consent the Forward Thrust could not proceed through that area without bloodshed and who knows where it might lead then in such circumstances. The upsurge of anti communist activities in the Afghan provinces of Paktiya, Paktika and Urgan brought around some unexpected changes in the mind set of Niaz. In early 1979 he migrated back to his ancestral village Spalga near MiranShah and issued Fatwas against the Afghan and Soviet. In the summer of 1979 he raised lashkar against the Afghan and attacked the Bari – Lalezai Post.

Mujhadeen,

After the April 1978 marxist revolution in Afghanistan over 150 mullahs were confined and imprisoned and after their release these fled to Pakistan and declared ‘jihad’²²⁷ the holy war against the communists, many followers joined them and after the soviet invasion ,the western and Pakistani interest in overthrowing the soviets resulted in using this religious ‘jihad’ to rally the muslim population of not only Afghanistan but also of entire Islamic world ,in Islamic history the people who fought early wars of Islam are also called mujahheed .Thus resistance to soviet became a religious war , it was the battle cry and it worked because soon arabs and other muslims from all over the world started pouring into Pakistan to fight the jihad.

These mujahideen were a blend of tribes,farmers and university students. Two most prominent mujahideen leaders Gul Badin Hikmatyar and Ahmed Shah Masooud were both graduates of Kabul University and many other leaders were either tribal patriarch or moderate

²²⁶ Forward Thrust, p – 14.

²²⁷ Ibid p,21

religious men like Rabbani and Sayyaf. The difference between them as noted by Brigadier Yousaf was ‘moderate can accept a woman in trouser but not in mini skirt where as a fundamentalist cannot’²²⁸.

AN - 26

22nd September 1984 was an ordinary quiet day at MiranShah. Commandant Lieutenant Colonel Amir was in his office when he heard the noise of an aircraft over heard, he thought as some visitor is coming unplanned so he rang up his Adjutant Major Hameed Butt, but there was no such visit planned. Commandant as a precaution went to the airfield in his jeep, He was hardly out of the eastern gate when the aircraft flared from southern direction, and touched down in the mid of runway, taxied till the northern end and taxied back towards the tarmac. It was a Russian built Afghan Air Force transport aircraft AN-24. Officer Commanding Inter Services intelligence detachment Captain Uzair also reached the spot. Tochi Scouts encircled the aircraft and soon the door of the aircraft opened and one by one eight persons in uniform disembark. They asked for political asylum. Five members were not the flying crew but they all had hatched a plan to escape to Pakistan. On a routine flight from Kabul – Matun, they just switched off their radio sets and landed at MiranShah.

A flurry of telephone calls now starting coming from HQ FC, from corps hq, from ISI, 9 Division, 116 Brigade, Commissioner D.I.Khan. Commandant took the Afghan Pilot in his jeep to the political agent’s office, all other were put under armed guard and offered tea and snacks. Tochi Scouts was put on full alert, meanwhile a PAF helicopter came to assess the type and make of the aircraft then a team of PAF pilots and technicians came in a Cessna Aircraft, Wing Commander Ghafoor was heading it. Orders were given and countermanded from higher headquarters and finally it was decided that aircraft will be flown early in the morning to Peshawar. At 1945 hours the Afghan Refugees for reasons better known to them started firing on the aircraft from the outer perimeter and own scouts replied in the same kind. The Fort was put on high alert, all troops families were also shifted inside.

Next day {23rdSeptember} the aircraft was flown, the rest of the Afghan personnel were taken by road under escort by Captain Iftikhar Durrani²²⁹

Hind MI- 24

The most dreaded and fearful Russian Helicopter of Cold War era was the Hind. On the afternoon of 13th July 1985 at 1120 hours two Hind landed at the tarmac of MiranShah. These helicopters flew nap of the earth avoiding any hostile ground fire, they just pop- up close to Saidgi and before anyone could react they were over head the Tochi Scouts Fort and after brief hovering they both landed, fully armed. The similar precautions of cordoning the airfield were adopted. Information was passed on to the higher headquarters and pilots from army aviation were flown. Pakistan Army Aviation has been operating the Russian helicopters since 1969{MI-8}. The beauty of Russian equipment as far as flying machines are concerned is that they all have similar engines, flying controls and gauges. Both helicopters

²²⁸ Muhammad Yousaf and Mark Adkin, *The Battle for Afghanistan*, {Yorkshire, Pen and Sword, 2007} p. 40

²²⁹ Tochi Scouts Digest of Service, also see daily Dawn and daily Mashraq {Urdu} of 23rd September 1984.

remained park overnight at Tochi Scouts, there was fear of Russian commando attack on the airfield for the destruction of their helicopters lest they fall into Western hands. Strict security measures were adopted. In the morning the first incident was that the helicopters after they were started fired few rounds accidentally, it created panic. To cut a long story short, both helicopters were safely flown away. One of the helicopters is still on flying status.

Another Pair lands at Chitral

On 4th October 1987 another pair of MI-24 {tail no.63 and 64} landed at Zivergul near Chitral. This pair was on a routine hunting mission of Majaheedin and lost its way. This pair belonged to the Spetsnatz unit of the Russian Army and crew was also Russian. They after landing as per their drill waited for the rescue and when it was late they started destroying the helicopters. One shepherd was watching all this. He walked many miles and told the Frontier Constabulary {FC} about these helicopters, who reached the spot. Russians initially offered combat to the FC but soon raised white flag.

Qasim Base was tasked to retrieve these helicopters. Team headed by Colonel Razzaq visited the site in a Puma helicopter. Initial plan envisaged the sling lift of the MI-24. However due to height and load factor it was disregarded. On 7th October 1987, a ground team reached there. Pakistan Television made a movie of this, which was shown all over the World same night.

Major Malang Bukhari was the ground team member and flight engineer of MI-8 with almost two decades of experience. He narrates "It was extremely cold at night, there was a constant danger of Russians rescue team as well. At times Russian jets and Mi-24 were seen prowling in their own area. We started looking at the helicopter and realized that it would be unwise to start it. Russians had already fired many rounds in the cockpit and secondly one could not over-rule the possibility of some explosive devices for self destruction. We started dismantling the helicopters, so they could be slung with a Puma. The location of forced landing was such that Puma could not hover there, moreover the threat of flying Russian MI-24s dictated that that fuselage should be taken by ground to a safe place.

On 14th October 1987 a British team also arrived for assistance. This operation lasted till 21st December 1987 when all parts were removed from the site. All this was done in freezing cold.

Fighting Falcon Search

The above mentioned two incidents of Afghan aircraft intruding into Pakistan air space and landing without any hassle at MiranShah exposed the fragile air defence state of Pakistan. Resultantly the F-16 aircraft were purchased from USA; it was the most technologically advanced aircraft of its time.

On 29th April 1987 at about 1235 hours, while intercepting intruding Afghan aircraft in North Waziristan, one PAF F-16 met with an accident. The pilot of the aircraft, Flight Lieutenant Shahid Sikandar bailed out and landed in Afghan territory in Saidgi Sector. The wreckage of the aircraft also fell inside Afghan territory near village Boran Tangi Narai.

The Tochi Scouts at Ghulam Hasan Khan and Saidgi witnessed the whole scene but they were not sure about the nationality of the aircraft and since the debris had fallen inside the Afghan territory, thus they were content with being just as mere spectators. Major Muzzaffar Raza was the Wing commander at GHK and he identified the fallen aircraft as F-16 but still he could not just walk into Afghan territory. Meanwhile within ten minutes it was confirmed that the aircraft is ours and pilot has to be found and brought back immediately, at all cost before any Russian or Afghan could reach it. Thus a race against time started.

The Afghan Mujahedeen were the greatest help, Major Raza, Captain Nasir Zaidi and later Major Raja Zahoor and Corps Subedar Major Malang Shah conducted the search. Flight Lieutenant Sikander was lucky to land close to an Afghan Mujahedeen village and was safely brought back, he had suffered minor injuries. Tochi Scouts took out a special gasht and search parties. The parties located the pilot and brought him back to Ghulam Khan within one hour of the accident. It is worth mentioning that the Afghan border was infested with Afghan troops and regularly being patrolled by Afghan aircraft and gunships. Therefore search operation by own troops was quite risky and difficult. The wreckage was spread over an area of two kilometres and despite the heavy odds, the search party succeeded in retrieving the wreckage and bringing it to Miranshah within twenty-four hours. The Mujahedeen cordoned the area and engaged the Afghan border security troops who were also searching the pilot and the wreckage

SU - 25

On 5th August 1988 at 2010 hours, a Russian SU-25 that had intruded into Pakistan was shot down by an F-16 of PAF. The wreckage fell in general area of Khar Kamar. Subedar Sardar Shah was the post commander at Khar Kamar, ‘ I had just taken the all correct report from all the platoons and was standing at the parapet when I saw a streaking flame coming down fast and then a big boom... I instantly knew it is an aircraft, I had taken part in the F – 16 rescue last year also so I thought it is another accident... I immediately informed my Wing Commander Major Tariq Iqbal at Datta Khel... I took out the Chigha party and reached the wreckage area, after some time Major Tariq and Captain Jan Muhammad also joined in with more strength’.

The area was cordoned off and search operation started for locating the whereabouts of the Russian Pilot. Next day Commandant Lieutenant Colonel Hazrat Ghulam Afridi also arrived along with Captain Lal Shahzad in command of a company. Tochi Scouts spread all over the area and search for the pilot was started; Captain Younis with another Scout company also joined in the search. Commandant knowing the area and culture announced an award of Rs. 20000/- for the capture and Rupees 5000 for any information about Russian Pilot. A PAF team also visited the site of crash headed by Air Vice Marshall Bahar Ul Haq, Air Officer Commanding, Northern Air Command and later supervised the shifting of wreckage to Miranshah.

On 07th August 1988 at 0530 hours the parachute was recovered from Muhammad Khel area and by mid noon the pilot was also recovered from the village Kharsin , with the help of villagers. He was taken to Miranshah put up for a night stay in the Tochi Mess under guard and next day taken to Rawalpindi on a helicopter. Major Tariq Iqbal and Captain Jan

Mohammad Khattak were awarded Chief of Army Staff's Commendation Card. Electricity was extended to the Kharsin Village as a reward.

OPERATION FREEDOM

After math of 11th September 2001{9/11}made Pakistan once again a front line state, to fight the terrorism.

Army Aviation

On 10th October 2001, One Puma helicopter of 21 Army Aviation Squadron was placed at Peshawar and within a week a Composite Rotary Flight was stationed at Kohat consisting of Jet Ranger and MI-17. Later two more Pumas were despatched from Qasim Base in support of 11 Corp. The task was to keep the Durand Line under observation. Major{Late}Imtiaz of 27 Squadron narrated, "We were at Peshawar, the corps headquarters after carrying out aerial reconnaissance would ask us to drop the infantry troops at prescribed heights to block the routes of infiltration. All such posts were established with the help of Army Aviation. Till a certain height the infantry troops would come on vehicles but to reach the heights would involve time. The tops were all covered with snow; thus essential rationing was also heli-transported to them."

Combat Group was extensively used in the early stages with both the squadrons moving out to the Western border. 33 Combat Squadron was deployed at Quetta where-as 31 Combat Squadron with its two Cobras and two Jet Rangers was at Kohat.

Major Khattak of 31 Squadron was sent to Kohat on 12th December 2001, mainly because he belongs to that area and had flown before, he recalls, "I flew with the divisional commander and showed him all the valleys and routes coming from Afghanistan. We saw the people coming in from across the Durand Line. During one of the reconnaissance mission we also saw B-52 Bombers dropping their loads. In another sortie I flew few miles across the Durand Line, I saw a detachment of Afghan troops digging their positions, they waved at me and I replied accordingly".

INACCESSIBLE AREAS

World trade centre was attacked on 11 September 2001 by terrorists which changed the completed world scenario and it had its effects on North Waziristan Agency also. Government of Pakistan passed the orders to annex those areas in tribal areas which had no government representation and establish the writ of the government effectively so that there is no chance of hiding the terrorists in these areas. There were three main inaccessible areas in North Waziristan Agency e.g Dwatoi alongwith Tochi Pass, Alwara Mandi alongwith Kazha Valley and Bangidar in the north. Three prong operations were planned simultaneously by Tochi Scouts in December 2001 coupled with Political Administration

North Waziristan Agency. By end Jan 2002 by the grace of Allah Almighty, and all the three areas were occupied successfully without a single casualty which was a great achievement for the unit as well as for the government. A wing from Shawal Rifles and Kurram Militia each also participated in the operations. Pakistan flag was hoisted on all the three points with a proper ceremony in which locals were also invited. Apart from other senior officers, the Vice Chief of Army Staff General Yousaf Khan also visited the areas in 2002 and appreciated the efforts made by Tochi Scouts. Tochi Scouts established the following posts in the areas:-

- a. Dwa Toi, Khara Wara, Gharlamai and Bajawari.
- b. Alwara Mandi, Kunar sar, Adami Kot and Ismail Khel
- c. Bangidar and Hassan Khel.

President of Pakistan Flies to Kabul.

On 1st April 2002 Chief Pilot Lieutenant Colonel Waqar Muhammad Khan was given a highly important mission to fly the President of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf, to Kabul and Bagram. Lieutenant Colonel Waqar narrates” On 1st April at 1500 hours we were told to fly to Kabul and drop Colonel Stanton of US Army to coordinate the visit of President of Pakistan. We took off at around 1700 hours for Kabul. This was our first exposure into Afghanistan Air space. Beyond Peshawar the lay of ground is mountainous and known for turbulence. The reported weather at Kabul was clear skies with cross-wind of 30-35 knots and severe wind shear warning on approach of Run- way 29. We landed at Runway 29 of Kabul airport under extreme conditions.

Kabul Airport was giving a deserted look. Effects of war were visible. There were destroyed aircrafts scattered all around the tarmac area. I.S.A.F. Headquarters was visible with bunkers and British soldiers on ground. This mission provided us an opportunity to do proving for the next days mission. On 2nd April 2002 we flew in Kabul along with two C-130 aircraft on historical visit of President of Pakistan to Afghanistan. This provided us an opportunity to visit ISAF HQ at Kabul and meet foreign troops. The visit was fruitful, educational and enjoyable as well.

After dropping the President of Pakistan at Kabul we flew to Bagram Air Base with Colonel Stanton of US Army. Bagram is an operational base, 25 nautical miles north of Kabul. We were really excited seeing the number of US Helicopters, large fleet of cargo aircraft and fighters. Colonel Stanton was our host at Bagram. He was worried on two accounts, one for his hospitality to give us lunch and secondly the hostile environment around Bagram Air Base. We were requested to stay on the aircraft with detailed instructions of not to walk on ground other than taxi- ways because of land mines. Colonel Stanton brought us lunch at 1400 hours that are called ready to eat meals in US Army. The high technology ready to eat meals was more of fun for us. The pack contained every thing from chewing gum, steaks, to Chinese food. You could warm the food in special envelopes by pouring small amount of water in it, make instant tea, juice etc. The quality of food was exceptionally good but not to our taste buds, never the less we enjoyed it. The day was spent interacting with 10 Mountain Division staff and people of Special Forces. Women of Special Forces carrying complete

field services equipment and weapons especially impressed Major Adnan. It was a classical example of woman, hand in glove with men fighting war on terrorism.

OPERATION AL MIZAN 10TH AUGUST 2002

Pakistan Army after securing the borders with India was able to fully concentrate on western borders. The foreign terrorists after fleeing from Afghanistan sought sanctuary in the border area of South Waziristan near Wanna. Army Aviation support in the form of one flight of helicopters was in action since 2001. This Flight remained at Kohat and pilots were circulated after certain time period. Aviation efforts were primarily utilised in establishing of blocking positions, shifting of troops, dumping in remote areas and evacuation of casualty apart from aerial reconnaissance.

On 8th August 2002, a mission was received by Headquarters Aviation Command to support 9 Division. Infantry Division had intelligence reports of 60-70 armed operatives residing in an isolated double storey hut located at the northern edge of village Main Toi. Plan was to cordon the area and then search the village. Eight helicopters {three MI-17, four Puma, one Jet Ranger} were earmarked for this operation.

Aviation had to heli lift a company size force of 71 Punjab Regiment with heavy weapons from Wanna and drop them on heights overlooking the target, an aerial command post for divisional commander was also established. One Puma helicopter armed with two machine guns was to provide the aerial combat support. During the planning phase, the sites for landing were selected off the map. At last moment, intelligence officer revealed that latest reports have confirmed that target is in village Shingi approximately four Kilometers north of previous site. Fresh planning was carried out and aerial reconnaissance was also conducted. Bad weather on 9th August prevented aviation elements from reaching Wanna. However on 10th August 2002, all helicopters along with the tactical headquarters comprising Brigadier Arif Nazir and Lieutenant Colonel Pervaiz Butt reached Wanna.

On the morning of **10th August 2002**, police, militia and infantry moved from Wanna and established inner cordon around village Shingi. At 1230 hours one Jet Ranger and two Pumas carried out aerial reconnaissance of the target. At 1300 hours seven helicopters started lifting the infantry company along with 75 millimeter recoilless rifle from Wanna and dropped them on pre-reconnoitered sites around the target area. The force was heli-lifted in three trips. The ground troops started the search and after pitch battle, few foreigners started fleeing from the target area. Puma helicopter was in air to monitor the operation. At 1800 hours the operation was terminated and all troops were again heli-lifted from the target area.

Helicopters remained at Wanna and on **11th August 2002** they took off at 1500 hours for Qasim Base. One Puma helicopter No.1528 piloted by Major Asad Mujahid and Captain Satti while taking off from Wanna made a hard landing and sustained substantial damage.

Pilots who participated in this operation Lieutenant Colonels Shahid Nazir, Irfan Ahmed, Sabah Ud Din. Majors Naeem Khattak, Masood Akhtar, Ashfaq Rehman, Irfan Warraich, Ikram Ul Haq, Sajjad Ehsan, Waqas Niazi, Mujahid Asad, Captains Satti, Abdul Rahim and Ehsan Masood. Total of 57 hours were flown and 438 troops were lifted. The Tactical Headquarter comprised of Brigadier Arif Nazir, Lieutenant Colonels Pervaiz Butt and Roghani. Clerks included Rashim Khan and Nawaz Ahmed.

Raising of 50 Border Security Patrol {BSP} Squadron (11th November 2002)

In view of the terrorist threats and other linked problems on the Western border, 50 BSP Squadron comprising newly inducted Huey helicopters and Caravan aircraft was raised under Ministry of Interior. Brigadier Muhammad Shafiq Awan was made in-charge of the BSP setup. 50 BSP Squadron was raised by Colonel Shahid Sardar, Lieutenant Colonel Hafiz Nadir was given the command of Rotary Flight and Major Masood later promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel was commanding Fixed Wing Flight.

Officers were selected to undergo flying training at Cessna Factory, Florida. The pioneer pilots of Caravan are. Majors Masood, Abid Jamil, Mian Javed Yasin, and Captains included Haroon Ansar, Nadeem Khan, Naveed Anwar, Ali Azad and Shahzad Farooq .

Pilots had a good experience at America, despite all the misgivings about security environments prevailing there especially with regards to Muslims. One of the instructor at Cessna was none other than Lieutenant Colonel {retired} Abdul Rasheed "Rasheedi." Caravan was ferried by American pilots to Pakistan

TALIBAN

Taliban' which is a Persian word denoting student of a religious Islamic school²³⁰, who ruled Afghanistan from 1994 till their military defeat by American forces in 2001 for their alleged protection to the most hunted organisation and man in history Al-Qaeeda and Osama bin Laden. The hunt is still on and talibans have not been eliminated rather they are still making the headlines ,only last week the government of Pakistan have signed a peace accord with their sympathisers in Swat.

Both Mujahedeen and Taliban took birth in Afghanistan which has an area of 252,830 square miles, population in 1979 was 17 million, 99% of them are Muslim however there are ancient Buddhist remains in Bamian province. literacy rate is less than 10%, majority of population almost 85% lives in rural area²³¹. The social pattern of country is wholly male dominating, agriculture is scarce and major crops are opium and related products. Weapon is an ornament of every afghan. The tribal system is the working system

²³⁰ Kamal Matinuddin *The Taliban Phenomenon Afghanistan 1994-1997* {Karachi, Oxford,, 1999} p 12

²³¹ Lester and Michael ,ed, *The Soviet Afghan War how a superpower fought and lost*, {Kansas, University Press of Kansas, 2002} p 2-6

based upon centuries old customs and tradition. Elders are respected and so are religious clergy. The Islamic population is divided into two main sects, 90% are Sunni and other are Shias, both have long history of feud and difference and are backed by Saudi Arabia and Iran. Another distinct feature of Afghan society is its division on linguistic and tribal basis. The Pashtuns are 50% of population and their tribes are mainly in eastern Afghanistan spilling over into neighbouring Pakistan, the northerners are Tajiks and southerners are Shia and hazarajats. Afghanistan came into existence in 1747, founded by a Pashtun Ahmed Shah Durrani, 'it was then merely a confederation of tribes and khanates'²³².

Islam is in fact the binding spirit in Afghanistan, all traditions and cultural roots are inline with Islamic teachings which itself is based upon 'Koran' the divine book and 'sunna' the life of Muhammad the prophet of Islam. There is a mosque in every village and at times more than two, all Islamic principles like annual pilgrimage to Mecca {once in a life} the annual one month fasting, slaughtering of animals, non interest trade, non alcohol consumption [although afghans were the biggest smugglers of alcohol in region during seventies], the most prominent feature of afghan society is the treatment of women according to Islamic principles which are veil, death for adultery, confinement to house and absence from public life.

The sunni and shias have bitter interpretation of islam and Koran, at times these differences can result in long bloody feuds which annually can claim over hundred of lives. Sunnis and shias seldom offer prayers together, the religious teacher 'Mullah' holds an important role in afghan society this title is attained after a talib {student} has studied religion for over twelve years

Over five million people²³³ migrated from Afghanistan to Pakistan, which by itself is not unusual as majority of these had blood ties in the neighbouring tribes. There was a life that was going on in the camps, which were mainly tents and mud houses inhabited by women, children and elders. The education which these children received was only religious, they were raised and groomed for only one purpose to fight, thus a child who was five years old when war broke out in 1979 was fifteen when it ended and thoroughly indoctrinated in religious teaching of war, hate for infidels, and conservatism about women. these seminaries are part of culture and also necessity, mainly funded by the rich gulf states who prefer having their own brand of sunni islam being spread. The religious seminaries called madreesah is an integral part of culture, they provide free education to boys and it consist of only about religion. in 1992 there were over 100 deeni madrasahs in Pakistan with over 30,000 students²³⁴.

After the soviet withdrawal on 15th February the afghan government held the fort and defied the mujhadeen attacks. The most notable feature was the inter party fighting among the mujahadeen, in one instance the Hikmat yar group ambushed Masood's commanders and

²³² Kamal Matinuddin, *The Taliban phenomenon*, {Oxford, Karachi, 1998} p 1

²³³ Ahmed Rashid *Descent into Chaos* {London, Penguin, 2008} p. 8

²³⁴ Kamal *Taliban Phenomenon*, pp. 14-16

killed over a dozen ,in retaliation Masood hunted them and hanged them publicly²³⁵. Pakistan was actively supporting the mujahedeen in a vain hope to have a consolidated control over Afghanistan. The mujhaadeen finally took control of Kabul but it was the northern group of uzbeks who were in control and not the pashtuns. The country was in civil war and war lords took control of varying cities looting, violence and killing was common, that was the state when the Taliban emerged. Thus mujhadeen failed as rulers to provide safety and security to people and country was in anarchy with independent war lords having own control of cities.

Rise of Taliban

One day in October 1994 there was an incident of sodomy in Kandahar{not unusual} and one Mullah Omar a 39 years old jihad veteran ,who had lost one eye against soviets and wounded couple of times and was passing his time by running a deeni madreessah having 30-40 taliban rushed to the scene along with them and few other comrades, he took hold of situation and from there onwards they within days got control of Kandhar and restored peace²³⁶. Pakistan also helped them as they escorted their thirty trucks convoy safely through the southern Afghanistan, Taliban also captured over 180000 AK-47 rifles from Spinboldack area. Taliban were young Afghans of pashtun ethnic back ground and sunni by faith ,they were mainly the students of seminaries in Pakistan and in border area, in fact they were the war orphans of jihad who were job less had nothing to look for future and engraved with Islamic values, thus they became the van guard and other groups started following them. Mullah Omar himself stated ‘we took up arms to achieve the aims of the afghan jihad and save our people from further suffering at the hands of the so called mujahdeen’²³⁷ the mujahedeen also joined them as the motto of this movement was restoration of peace in Afghanistan and Islamic values. A total of over 35000 talibans from Pakistan base seminaries joined them majority of them were pashtuns²³⁸. After taking over Kandhar the Taliban issued decree that put an end to the unrest and lawlessness ,people were ordered to hand over their weapons something unheard of in Afghanistan but it was implemented. It was at this time that they carried out public stoning of adulterers and cutting hands of thieves, they also banned the women from coming into open without full veil. All these acts were in true tradition of islam, Mullah Omar and his colleagues all lived in same mud houses and conducted their chores while sitting on floor which is an Islamic and afghan tradition thus they became a symbol of Islamic renaissance in its purest form ,this is what attracted the Taliban of Pakistan and compelled other mujahideen groups to surrender and join their ranks. Not all mujahideen groups did this and Taliban had to fight pitched battles like in Heerat in 1995. This was a major deviation from the past war as Taliban did not resort to guerrilla warfare rather preferred open attacks.

In 1995 Taliban struck against Hikmat Yar and forced him out of Afghanistan and also clashed against the Shiites Hazaras and on 19th March 1995 Taliban came face to face against the Lion Of Panjsher Massoud who gave them first taste of defeat but Taliban

²³⁵ Stephen Tanner *Afghanistan a military history*, {Massachusetts, Da Capo, 2003 } p. 272

²³⁶ Peter Marsden, *The Taliban, War ,Religion and new order*, {Karachi, Oxford, 1998}, p. 43.

²³⁷ Rashid, *Taliban*, ,p. 23.

²³⁸ Kamal, *Taliban*, p 16

retaliated and finally capturing Kabul in September 1996 although the Masooud and Hikmat Yar had united against them. From this point onwards they constantly remained engaged in a war with the northern people of Afghanistan and attempted to capture Mazar Shariff thus till the American invasion of Afghanistan the Taliban were never really in command of Afghanistan ,they had all the country except the Panjshir Valley.

Taliban ideology was very simple. adherence to Islamic teaching of Koran and peace in Afghanistan, they had no political agenda and neither they were working for any country although by virtue of religious affiliation they were close to sunni Pakistan and Saudi Arabia than the shia Iran. The deep rooted conflict between sunni and shias resulted in bitter opposition to Taliban in southern Afghanistan.

Taliban rule was unique because they were living in seventh century Arabia and simulating the life of early caliphs and teaching of prophet coupled with the tradition and customs of afghan. They had no diplomatic ties with any state other than Pakistan and Saudi Arabia, they had no embassy no foreign policy or political agenda, it was the fourteen hundred years old religious book Koran which was their manifesto and everything had to be done according to it ,since Koran states that woman are inferior to men thus they are, as Koran states the punishment of adultery is public stoning thus it has to be like this. ‘the woman mother of seven has confessed killing her husband ,sentence of death up held by three courts....she was shot in head in front of 20,000 crowd’²³⁹. In other instance women accused of adultery was stoned to death publicly, thieves hands were cut in public and Taliban for the first time in Afghan history banned opium cultivation

These acts were looked with disdain in civilised world but were applauded in Islamic world especially in neighbouring Pakistan apart from the fundamentalist Saudi Arabia. The world took first serious notice of Taliban when in 2001 they decided to destroy the thousand years old Bhudda carving in Bamian province²⁴⁰.No amount of pressure could sway them from this ,neither offer of money nor threat of force. Pakistani president General Musharraf admits in autobiography, that he tried hard to convince the Taliban but he refused, even Saudi crown prince went to Kandhar to meet Omar,who met him in a mud house sitting on a floor and when prince accused him of lying he simply rushed out and later came back drenched in water ,and said I have just poured cold water over my head to cool myself,had you not been my guest I would have done something to you.

Taliban might have been still in power had not the 9/11 event took place, resultantly whole world became paranoid with the Osama and Al-Qaeeda and both were reportedly in Afghanistan. Any other regime in world would have buckled under the dire straits but Taliban were not normal and they simply refused to even acknowledge their existence and later admitted that even if Osama is here we will not hand over him because under afghan tradition he is our guest and has seek protection and we will abide with our tradition and USA must provide the evidence and later even agreed to handing over Osama to be tried by an international court provided evidence is given of his involvement in terrorism. It is worth recording that Afghanistan was attacked by over seventy American cruise missiles in August

²³⁹ Jason Burke *Al-Qaeeda* {London,Penguin,2004} p.117.

²⁴⁰ Pervez Musharraf, *In The Line of Fire*, {London,Simon & Schuster,2006} pp. 214-215.

1998 on alleged AlQaeeda bases for their role in bombing USA embassies in Kenya and Tanzania a month early²⁴¹

Enduring Freedom

American forces started bombing Afghanistan from 7th October 2001²⁴² and on 19th October 2001 the first ever US marine operation against Taliban was launched at Kandhar ,on 21st October American started bombing Taliban front line soldiers facing against northern alliance in the north of kabul this bombing reached its crescendo on 5th November when American used daisy cutter bombs,Kabul fell to northern alliance on 12th november and on 26th November 2001 the first batch of American Marines landed at Kabul and on 02 December 2001 the operation Anaconda was launched to capture Alqaeeda,,neither Osama has been found and nor Al Qaeeda has been defeated rather their has been an increase in AlQaeeda attacks now directed against the NATO countries like Spain{Madrid}UK {London} and Pakistan who is not a NATO member but an active member of the alliance. Mullah Omar also escaped allegedly on a Honda motor cycle.

Operation Enduring Freedom is the code name of the ongoing operation of America against the terrorist who launched the successful and most lethal attack on American soil in its living memory and also in written history. Repercussions had to be there and they had to be quick and a lesson for all to know . ‘We may be the only one left in this war, that’s ok with me , we are Americans’ President George Bush after the attacks commented²⁴³,this much Bush was sure that is Osama Bin laden and his Al-Qaeeda behind this attack but he did not had the proof and neither he needed one at this time, he wanted him out dead or alive. Osama was in Afghanistan a land locked country ,barren, desolate about the size of Bush home state Texas. Afghan are to some historians the 12th lost tribe of Moses. Present day Afghanistan took birth as an after shoot of Great Game when British after suffering the most devastating defeat in military history when only one survived out of a force of 16000 in 1839 and later again suffering similar fate in 1879 finally relinquished their claim and demarcated the Indian subcontinent into Afghanistan and British India with a ‘Durand Line’ running on the crest of mountains, naturally tribes never accepted and neither respected it.

Analysis of Taliban and Mujhadeen

Mujhadeen and Taliban are two sides of one coin, they share same culture, language, heritage, religion, and history. Mujhadeen were created artificially to fight a super power which they already were fighting as isolated individual tribes, parties and groups basing upon their centuries old traditions .They were based in Pakistan ,they were funded by the Western countries and Gulf states, they were trained and indoctrinated by the religious and political groups based in Pakistan. Even the families of all these mujhadeen fighters and all other people who migrated from Afghanistan were given the religious meaning of mujahedeen .Yet these mujhadeen were not hardliner as Taliban. The mujhadeen were too diversified in culture. The northern Uzbeks in 1992 had over 1800 girls²⁴⁴ studying in Balkh University

²⁴¹ Rashid *Taliban*, p135

²⁴² Tanner ,*Afghanistan*,pp 296-298

²⁴³ Bob Woodward, *Bush At War*,{ New York, Simon & Schuster,2002},p,81.

²⁴⁴ Rashid *Taliban* p52

the only operational university of Afghanistan. Mujhadeen were united as long as their interests were there however the inbuilt tribal feuds were too high and rigid to be overcome by them thus they remain loggerhead moreover the interest of Pakistan in having pashtun based power as opposed to Uzbek base was another factor of constant civil war.

Taliban were an independent idealistic movement which was not based upon tribal code but on that unifying element of religion however since the religion itself is divided into sects thus Taliban pursued their own sect of sunni islam which the 90% of Afghans followed and since they were so deep rooted into religion that they saw the other sects as non muslims and acted according to the teaching of their own sect that is the reason of their killing over 6000 hazarajats shittes in Mazar Shariff battle of July 1998 and it should also be noted that almost 3000 Taliban were also killed by the other sect in a battle in the same city a year ago. This religious difference also put Taliban against the shia based Iran whom majority of sunni muslims consider almost non Islamic in nature.

Militarily Taliban differ from mujahadeen ,because unlike them taliban failed to offer a stiff reistance to American forces. Taliban had to fight against their countrymen more than the Mujahadeen. The major reason lies in the fact that where as the Mujahadeen call was nationalistic the Taliban cause was revolving around the religion. The arab connection of Osama with Taliban is not new²⁴⁵, Osama fought with mujahadeen in 1988 and funded them it was sheer coincidence that when he returned from Sudan in 1995-6 the Taliban were on the surge and their ideology was in line with his ie the spread of Islam and practical application of Muhammad's teaching.

Both mujahedden and Taliban were backed by the Pakistan military in covert and overt way, Pakistan had strategic interest in the region and over 40 million pashtuns are living in Pakistan thus it always welcomes a pashtun hold of Afghanistan, taliban remained under Pakistan influence for a short time but later they carved their own policy which in any case was in line with Saudi and Pakistani thinking.

Taliban had a consistency in their ideology, they for the first time were able to eradicate the opium cultivation and also to disarm the society.

There are twelve major tribes who lived on the eastern border more famous are Afridis, Khattaks, Shinwaris, Mohmand, Mahsuds, Wazirs and Orakzai. They are pashtun by ethnicity and these pashtuns are about 20 million in number²⁴⁶{9 million in Afghanistan and other in Pakistan} the other major ethnic group of Afghanistan are the northern tribes who are Uzbek and Tajik they differ in appearance from pashtun as they have more mongol blood line, the binding factor is the religion Islam in which they are again having varying difference, the northerners having moderate view and pashtuns having extremist view point. Soviet Union tried to cultivate Marxist ideas in Afghanistan in 1979 and later invaded as well with over 85000 troops but retreated after eight years and having suffered 55000 casualties thanks mainly to American military aid to tenacious afghans and their brethren Arabs

²⁴⁵ Jason Burke, Al-Qaeeda, {London,Penguin,2004} p.134.

²⁴⁶ Angel Rabasa, Cheryl Bernard, Peter Chalk{Arlington,Rand,2004},pp,286-293

mujahedeen for whom it was a religious war the Jihad. After soviet departure the tribes fought among each other and finally in 1994 the student 'Taliban' revolution took place in which the veteran front line Mujahedeen who were now mainly spending life in an anarchic environments by teaching religion to orphans' of the war in the Pashtun tribes led by one eyed Mullah Omar of Kandhar and his close mujahedeen who almost all had lost either a leg or hand in Jihad started the drive and within three months they virtually had the half of Afghanistan under their control. And by 2001 were in control of whole except a valley under northern tribe.

Laden is probably the most romantic rebel, guerrilla, terrorist of all time, he seems to be reincarnation of 12th century Hasan bin Sabah and his assassins. Laden was twenty six and a billionaire²⁴⁷ when he came to Peshawar from Saudi Arabia {the way Che Guerra went to Bolivia} and soon Osama became the most fierce fighter followed maniacally especially by his Arabs and other Mujahedeen's. After the war Osama soon became disillusioned with Afghan civil war and also of Saudi royal family and settled in Yemen from where he conducted a series of spectacular attacks on American embassies in Kenya and Tanzania in 1998 and than migrated to Afghanistan now under Taliban.

Mullah Omar demanded a proof from Bush later however Omar agreed to put Osama on an open court of international justice, both demand rejected by Bush. Between 11th September- 7th October 2001 the Central Command of America {Centcom} under whose area of operation Afghanistan falls carried out all appreciation and put forward three plans²⁴⁸, the first one calls for destruction through air power only but finally the presence of ground troops and destruction using air power was approved.

Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld admitted 'the hard fact was that America could not operate in Afghanistan without having allies',²⁴⁹ The fact was Afghanistan was not a country at all, there were no target to be hit as in conventional states or as in Iraq. President Bush remarked 'whats the fun in hitting a \$ 10 tent with \$ 200 million worth cruise missile'²⁵⁰. There was no electricity, command and control centres, air defence weapons, telecommunication etc what little was there it was not affecting anything, what was present on ground were 60,000 Taliban, a thousand of Osama Arab warriors and potential million pashtuns in tribes all ready to wage another war.

A quick glance through history confirmed Americans that Afghanistan is not a push over. All neighbouring countries were coerced like Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan and Pakistan into giving bases and all other support for which American paid and wrote off old loans. This is where a new way of warfare in American military history took birth. instead of simply landing the troops in Afghanistan or bombing it into rubble the Americans paid the northern alliance money to wage war against the talibans with their {USA} aerial support. It was a unique war where the first Americans to land were Central intelligence Agency field

²⁴⁷ Jason Burke, *Al-Qaeda The True Story of Radical Islam*, London, Penguin, 2004, pp 28-55

²⁴⁸ Michael DeLong, *Inside Centcom, The Unvarnished Truth About the Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq*, Washington, Regency, 2004, pp, 27-39

²⁴⁹ Bob Woodward, *Plan of attack*, London, Simon & Schuster, pp, 6-14,

²⁵⁰ Ibid

operatives followed by the special operation forces whose main task was to guide the American bombers to the target with the help of laser guided equipment.

By 23rd December 2001 Kabul was captured by the Northern Alliance and soon American forces started landing in Afghanistan in numbers. Taliban simply fled to their stronghold in Kandhar and took refuge in mountains with Americans following hot on their heels supported by British and Northern Tribes. The Taliban and the wanted Laden escaped through the mountains towards the east and into eastern tribes of Pakistan. Some pitched battles and operations took place like 'Operation Anaconda' and heavy bombing in Tora Bora mountains.

Pakistan was coerced into deploying its almost two corps along the border to stop the Talibans fleeing and from this point onwards an intricate and delicate situation took birth. Pakistan denied Americans right to cross into its territory in hot pursuit of Talibans and rather took it self to hunt them down but Americans were not satisfied with this arrangements yet they conceded to Pakistan, for an outsider it looks extremely enigmatic that the biggest super power on god's earth is unable to chase the talibans and hunt them down in primitive mountains. The answer lies in following.

Pakistan is a nuclear state with a population of over 150 million with 97% Muslim and over 3 million Christians²⁵¹, the biggest in an Islamic country, the country due to prolong military rules have become a nursery of radical Islam and ongoing guerrilla movement in Kashmir against India finally resulted in Indians amassing their forces on border in 2002 for a showdown with Pakistan. As soon as American bombing campaign started in Afghanistan there were wide spread mass demonstration in Pakistan although not as violent as expected. USA had the following option ,either to launch a ground operation from Afghanistan onto the tribal area and in ensuing expect high casualties, launch an air campaign for a prolong period during which the population might revolt against the existing friendly regime and finally USA could have allowed the India to launch the attack from the east and simultaneously itself launch attack on the tribes. But all these had catastrophic consequences thus USA adopted the same strategy as they adopted in initial routing of Taliban, they simply paid Pakistan to wage their war and simultaneously put the tribal area under aerial observation and conducted joint operations with Pakistan army. Americans trained Pakistan army into night vision fighting by providing helicopters{almost 40 Bell 412 and 20 cobras²⁵²}and later training them in USA as well. New militia force was raised with American funding, intelligence was also shared.

Between 2002-2006 almost three hundred hard core Al-Qaeeda operatives have been arrested in Pakistan and over 80% of all wanted persons have been arrested in Pakistan by USA but all this has come at a very high price. From 2002 the attacks on Christian community started increasing in which church and schools were targeted, all foreign national became a target of suicide or kidnap attempts. In June 2002 eleven French engineers were killed in suicide attack and later American journalist Daniel pearl was butchered, Pakistan army itself became target of suicide attacks and one three star general has been killed and other has been injured apart from over 200 other all ranks killed in various attacks. A series

²⁵¹ ,Angel,Muslim World,pp 254-256

²⁵² Azam and Cheema,History of Pakistan Army Aviation,Islamabad,Army Press,2008, pp 348-378

of bomb and suicide attacks virtually paralysed the country and brought it to anarchy. The public support especially in tribal areas started increasing for the talibans, this was mainly due to the religious ties and also as an reaction of American operation in the tribal area, the Americans at times as in 2003 Bajour area operated and fired missile on suspected hideouts of Taliban in Pakistan territory which killed over a dozen civilian population.

America thus found itself in a catch-22 situation ,if they attack on suspected habitats in tribal area than they can face high casualties of their own troops and a possible repercussion and public lashing from Pakistan and if it goes unchecked than a coup or anarchy can take place, on the other hand if they simply allow Pakistan Army to carry out operation inside Pakistan on American intelligence than the results might take time, one additional factor was that almost all Al-Qaeeda members got underground in the major cities. Thus America opted for a combination of both ,it does not operate within Pakistan territory yet it violates airspace as and when required and it also allows Pakistan army and intelligence agencies to operate at their own.

In October 2005 the Northern Areas of Pakistan were hit by a massive earthquake and Americans led the way in the biggest helicopter rescue relief operation in the history ‘Operation Lifeline’²⁵³. In same year the Swat area of Pakistan underwent a radical change when people started an armed campaign to have Islamic laws in their territory and called themselves as ‘Taliban’ soon it became a full fledged armed resistance and employed a corps of Pakistan army. In December 2007 the Pakistan underwent a shock when twice premier Benazir Bhutto was assassinated in a political rally by hardliners, for next three days there was no writ of state in Pakistan, later in elections the ex army chief and president Musharraf was defeated in parliamentary elections and soon democracy return to power. This presented new dilemma to USA as although it champions democracy yet it believes in rhetoric in this aspect as far as Islamic states are concerned because in true democratic state it is the will of people that has to be prevailed and people are generally against American policy . In 2009 the Pakistan made a compromise with the Taliban in the Swat area which is highly criticised in America.

First Anti Terrorist Training

This exercise was conducted at Pishin Ranges between 26th May to 29th May 2003.33 Combat Squadron and 4 Squadron participated.Vice Chief of Army Staff General Yousaf witnessed it along with senior army officers. The exercise setting depicted air assault concept.MI-17 helicopters, heli-dropped the Special Services Group troops near target area, which had been cordoned by 41 Infantry Division troops. Cobras provided escort and aerial fire support. 400 cannon rounds and 26 rockets were fired in this exercise.

Night Vision Goggles{NVG} Training.

²⁵³ Ibid,pp 400-412

Collaboration with American resulted in joint training of NVGs with them. The first such training exercise was conducted at Pasni from 20th to 26th September 2002. The training was co-ordinated at Joint Services Headquarters level and the purpose at aviation level was to train nucleus of few officers who would subsequently be instrumental for training all Aviators. Pilots including Major Chanzeb and Major Shahzad went from Qasim Base. Own pilots stayed at Pasni and American crew along with a Black Hawk helicopter used to come from the Carrier for exercise purpose. Americans made our pilots familiar with the NVGs and scanning techniques. One day one American was asked why he is collecting sand before their daily departure back to carrier and he replied "One of our colleague is having her birthday today, she has been on the carrier for quite long and has requested mud as a birthday gift".

Another similar training with Americans was conducted at Jacobabad Airfield between 20th October-20th November 2002. Ground Training followed by 20-25 hours of flying training comprised the syllabi. Six pilots (2xMI-17, 2x Puma and 4xY-12) were trained including Lieutenant Colonels Tariq Naseem, Muhammad Irfan, Haider Raza Bangash and Asif Jah, Majors included, Khalid Ahmed, Kashif, Adnan Warraich and Amanullah. Flight Engineers Subedar Shaukat, Havildars Saqlain, Ashraf, Inayat and Siddique., were amongst the pioneer trainees. Later on, the cadres were planned by Aviation Command to be held under Groups. Lieutenant Colonel Irfan narrates "Mr Tiernney was my American instructor on Puma, he was a Vietnam Veteran, and had over 3600 hours which included only 40 hours on Puma {Irfan himself an instructor, has over 4000 Flying hours which include hours in excess of 2000 on Puma}. Initially I gave him currency and later we flew together with NVGs. We both would wear the goggles apart from two scanners, flight engineer would remain normal. NVG training was carried out relentlessly. Mr Tiernney would always fly with his regulation gear that included one rifle, one pistol and dagger apart from few pouches. When I inquired what all is in it, he replied "All junk, mate, but regulations are regulations". One exercise at night was conducted near Pano Aqil that involved realistic planning and conduct. Later in one of the training exercise one MI-17 of 4 Squadron was fired upon by the Bugtis. Army Aviation on emergent basis procured NVGs and squadrons conducted hectic training on them. This was a major achievement, fear of night had been conquered. Combat Squadrons later conducted night battle drills.

Exercise Fox Hunt

As the tempo of war against terror intensified, it was felt at highest level that desired results are viable if terrorist strongholds are struck with speed and ferocity; and that is possible only by utilising the medium of air. Thus the concept of air assault and Special Operation Task Force was evolved. Army Aviation did not have integral troops for such kind of operations and Special Services Group does not have the air wing, therefore these two elite corps were married. Exercise Fox Hunt was the culmination stage of their integrated training. It was the largest ever mutual interaction between these two and it validated the concept of air assault.

The exercise preparation, briefing and planning started in the first week of August 2003. On 9th August 2003 Commander SSG and on 11th August Commander Qasim Base Brigadier Arif Nazir gave verbal orders.

Aviators underwent a lot of effort and training. Since the beginning of the year night vision goggles and nocturnal flying was carried out extensively. It became routine to hear the helicopters getting air borne before Fajr prayer from Qasim Base endlessly for weeks preceding the D-day. Crew was made to operate at night and during day they would rest. During training which involved night navigations from Qasim Base to Tarbela and hours long night training sorties in the training area. Never before any of the serving aviator had gone through such a heavy dose of night flying.

Cobra pilots stayed at Aviation Mess and practiced mountain flying around Muree. Secrecy and security was maximum. No one knew what this is all about, on the other hand morale was looked after through hosting of dinner by the GOC for the pilots and recreation trips.

Air Assault Concept

Aviation was to helilift the Special Services Group troops from a pick up zone {PZ} and drop them in a landing zone {LZ} in dark, around the target area to establish the cordon and blocking position. This ground force was to be provided protection by attack helicopters. These attack helicopters were also to engage fleeing target.

On 13th August 2003, first wave of eleven cargo helicopters heli lifted 256 combat soldiers of 1st, 2nd Commando Battalions along with Zarrar Company from Tarbela at 0430 hours. Their designated exercise target was depicted in Maroba Valley, a stretch of 4-6 kilometers located south east of Cherat. The formation led by Lieutenant Colonel Shahid Nazir of 27 Squadron flew along un-reconnoitered route of Gurghashti- Attock Fort without any NVG or en-route terminal guidance and dropped troops in eleven different landing zones at 0500 hours. Second wave of another 220 combat soldiers was dropped by a wave of 11 cargo helicopters at 0600 hours, third wave of 11 cargo helicopters dropped 220 combat soldiers at 0930 hours. Attack helicopters provided escort to all the formations and further cordoned the area. These attack helicopters remained in the area to deter any threat to the ground forces. Forward Area Arming and Refueling was provided at Nizampur. Before last light de-induction of troops was carried out and all helicopters reached back Qasim Base by 1800 hours.

Total of 25 helicopters including Puma, MI-171, Jet Ranger, Cobra and UH-2 of 4, 21, 27 and 31 and 50 Squadrons participated. There were 48 pilots and a further of 134 all ranks who took part in this exercise. 399 Electrical and Mechanical battalion did a commendable job when they put nine MI-17 and four Puma helicopters on flight line within a span of 10 days. A total of 193 flying hours were generated during this exercise and 1696 troops were heli-lifted. GOC Army Aviation and Chief of General Staff remained in air and monitored the progress of the exercise. This exercise set the pattern of Aviation operations in days to come.

Operation Tight Noose-2nd October 2003

This was the first major operation against terrorist undertaken by Army Aviation in Waziristan Agency. The target area was located few kilometers south west of Angoor Adda, close to Durand line and north west of Wanna .Two valleys approach the target area namely Niza Algad and Manta Algad. The preparation for this operation started in August 2003 and Exercise Fox Hunt was the training for this operation. Lessons and short comings felt during the Fox Hunt were overcome in the preceding time . Crew from all corners were collected at Qasim Base. Details of operation were not disseminated to the crew due to secrecy but squadron commanders were alerted well in time.

The main emphasis was on formation flying. It was carried out both in day and night. Night training was paramount as the operation was envisaged in hours of darkness. Extensive night flying employing night vision goggles were carried out .It initially came as surprise to the residents of Rawalpindi to hear the helicopter noise in hours of darkness but gradually this noise became part of the daily life. The most invaluable was the aerial reconnaissance of the target area on 6th September 2003, provided to all Aviation Squadron Commanders. This was done despite the reservation of Military Intelligence Directorate of giving away the surprise. Entire mission was simulated repeatedly at similar areas. Imageries of the area along with weather details were frequently updated.

Another reconnaissance was conducted for establishing of forward base in three sectors namely Razmak-Wanna, other being Thal-Spinwan-Mir Ali- Miram Shah- Khajuri and Sanwakai-Jandola- Tank. In the end Jandola and Miram shah were earmarked .

Target area consisted of few scattered compounds located approximately 2 kilometers south of confluence of Niza Algad and Manta Algad Valleys. The only approach to the target area forms a stretch of 4-6 kilometers of undulating and broken area littered with Pine trees at the confluence. Field elevation is 6500-7500 feet, surrounded by mountains ranging from 8000-10,000 feet. Average temperature in the area is 15-35 degrees Celsius.

Reportedly a group of 30-35 foreigner terrorists supported by locals were based here .They were carrying out the terrorist activities not only in Afghanistan but also in Pakistan.

First Attempt, 4th September 2003

On this date Aviation Force along with Special Services Group comprising 14 helicopters with one Y-12 as stand by at Qasim Base flew to Bannu at dusk where last minute co ordination and planning was conducted. Before first light the helicopters took off in varying formations. The weather turned bad and all formations entered clouds. The valley was narrow and on both side of the flight path were high mountains. Major Kayani of Combat Group was flying the Cobra and he vividly remembers, “There was no contact with the lead helicopter, I glued onto the instruments and maintained heading” His namesake Lieutenant Colonel Kayani was flying the MI-17 helicopter and he had the similar experience. Brigadier Rashid the Base Commander was flying a Lama helicopter but there was nothing, which he could do at that time. The mouth of the valley is narrow and not more than two formations can enter together. The follow up formations took up holding position

and waited for the clearance from lead formation. This spell remained for some time and wisely pilots forced landed at suitable areas and waited for the weather to get clear. It was a miracle supported by the extensive training which saved the day.

Next attempt was made on following day but again bad weather {dust storm} forced the helicopters to abort the mission.

Air Assault

These abortive missions were a blessing in disguise as they helped in overcoming the shortcomings observed. On 1st October 2003 a formation of four MI-17 and one Puma picked up ninety two commandoes from Tarbela and dropped them at Mianwali. Four Cobras and one MI-17 helicopter along with maintenance crew also reached Mianwali from Multan.

On the night of first and 2 October 2003, Special Services Group and infantry moved from Wanna and Anghoor Adda through Niza Algad valley. They reached the target area at around 0430 hours and established a cordon

At 0430 hours 2 October 2003, Alpha Formation comprising two Cobras and one MI-17 took off from Mianwali for Wanna, followed by Bravo Formation of three MI-17, one Puma helicopter with 90 Commandoes of SOTF on board. This formation landed at target area at 0615 hours. Meanwhile Cobras of Alpha Formation had already landed at Wanna and were waiting for the orders. The Special Operation Task Force {SOTF} commander immediately after landing asked for the Cobras, which responded and opened fire at the target area. These Cobras engaged the target area round the clock and kept replenishing from Wanna.

First TOW Fired

During this operation the first ever operational TOWs were fired. Major Khattak and Major Kayani were the crew members. Major Khattak narrates.” The target was a compound designated as target No.5. It was a strong point at an elevation of 5500 feet and terrorist were firing from this point. Hovering fire was not possible, Major Kayani the gunner had never fired the TOW before. I made the first run over the target at 150 feet above ground level and opened up the cannons and in next run, at 700-800 meters away from the target, Major Kayani fired the TOW which hit the main complex, and desired results were achieved.” In the same operation one Cobra suffered compressor stall and made emergency landing, later it was rectified and crew flew it back to Wanna. Four MI-17 of Bravo Formation after dropping their load, flew to Wanna, and waited for any impromptu requirements. They were later utilised to heli- lift 70 troops before last light from Wanna to target area. That night four Cobras, two MI-17 and one Puma remained at Wanna whereas two MI-17 and one Puma remained at Bannu.

On 3rd October 2003 combing and sanitization of the target area was carried out. Cobras were again called to engage the targets. By 0900 hour operation was successfully completed and by 1000 hours 170 Special Services Group troops were de-inducted by the

Army Aviation helicopters. Later one Puma and two MI-17 were utilised for the transportation of the prisoners. A total of 139 flying hours were generated and 400 troops were helilifted

Pilots who participated in this operation included Colonel Shahid Sardar, Lieutenant Colonels Shahid Nazir, Abid Saeed, Adil Shahzad, Anwar Iqbal, Asif Jah,

Majors were Chanzeb, Rizwan, Umar, Qasim, Sohail, Khattak, Nabeel, Mazhar, Tariq, Ehsan, Babar, Nadeem Kiani, Khalid, Farrukh, Raja Khalid, Waqas, Khusro

Captains included Shams, Arsalan, Kashif, Imran, Sarfraz, and Ansar,

Thunder Storm

On 4th October 2003 another operation was under taken in northern areas in Tangir Valley to flush out the terrorists. Target was located east of River Tangir, sited on a flat ridge, which remains obscured from ground till one climbs up the ridge. It was a complex of mud huts, bunkers and firing range located at an altitude of 2000 meters, surrounded by mountains ranging from 3000-3500 meters. Only one helicopter can approach and exit the valley at one time.

One infantry brigade, Frontier Corps Wing and troops of Force Command Northern Area moved from Gilgit to Sazin. Special Services Group troops were located at Pattan, these were to establish the cordon around the target area and carry out search operation by first light 3rd October 2003. 14 helicopters including seven MI-17, two, Alouettes, one Lama and four Huey -2 were to drop air borne reserve force of 78 SSG troops in the target area, provide aerial fire support, causality evacuation and de induction of troops.

Major Khalid Amir Rana and Major Tariq Butt of 8 Squadron carried the first reconnaissance with Commander FCNA and SSG on board. Major Rana narrates, "We took off from Gilgit in a pair and entered the narrow valley. As per our routine flying while going from Qasim to Gilgit at times we used to make this short cut, so locals were used to helicopter flying once in two month times otherwise this area was hardly ever flown. In order to maintain the surprise, we flew at normal altitude and I pointed out the target area to the commanders, I intentionally slowed the helicopter, to give more time to commanders to make the plan."

On 3rd October 2003, the SSG troops were heli-lifted from Cherat to Qasim and subsequently at Gilgit and Jaglot by 1730 hours. There were four Huey at Pattan, while four MI-17 were at Jaglot, three MI-17 were at Gilgit along with two Alouettes and lone Lama.

There was no resistance from the target area and as such no action took place. Later aviation effort was utilised for de-induction of the troops.

Pilots who participated in this operation were from 27, 5, 8 and 50 Squadron. They included

Lieutenant Colonels Nouman Ghafoor, Babar Adil Shahzad, Pervaiz Butt

Majors were Nadeem Ghous, Qaiser, Altaf, Khusro, Ehsan, Aftab, Nisar, Riazat, Obaid, Jehantab, Shahid Saeed, Khalid Rana, Tufail and Tariq

Captains. Javed, Arsalan, Sameer, Adil, Shams, Bilal, and Mansoor

General Officer Commanding Aviation Major General Azam along with Base Commander Brigadier Rashid and Colonel Shahid Sardar remained in air to monitor the operation

Between October 2001 to October 2003 Army Aviation generated a total of 66,930 flying hours and executed 6869 missions in 2002 and 4198 missions in 2003. In war against terror Army Aviation from 10th October 2001-10th October 2003 transported a total of 2548 troops and 1,32,545 kilogram of load and flew 1660 hours. Four TOW were fired along with 2200 rounds of 20 millimeter cannon apart from Two Rockets.

Operation Kalosha

In continuation of war against terrorism on our western border another air assault operation “Kalosha” was conducted in the second week of **January 2004**. With the experience of previous air assault operations, the importance of weather became paramount for the success of aviation assets.

The area of operation was bounded by the Line Miram shah-Bannu in the north/north east, Tank in south and Durand Line in the west. Target was located in the general area Kalosha and Shin Warsak approximately 10 kilometers west of Wana.

By this stage few aviation assets were permanently placed at Mianwali Base for any urgent requirement and rest of the crew and helicopters would be called up from Qasim, Multan and Quetta at short notice. All operational planning was conducted by the Military Operation Directorate which was attended by staff officers from Aviation Command and on receipt of their orders the Aviation would start planning. Training was conducted continuously. Pilots at Mianwali were circulated after certain time period. Bannu was also established as a forward base with Forward Area Arming and Refuelling Company. Shortage of crew and pilots remained a sore point. At the need of hour crew would be mustered from all over Pakistan but this had a short coming in terms of crew co-ordination, but there was no immediate answer to this.

On **7th January 2004**, all pilots and helicopters were mustered at Qasim Base. Mobile phones were of great help in getting the crew, like Lieutenant Colonel Adil Shahzad was driving near Mandra when he got the General Officer Commanding call on his cellphone to cancel his leave and report to Qasim Base. A total of 23 helicopters including nine MI-17, five Puma, six Cobras, two Alouette and one Lama were earmarked for this operation along with 210 Special Services Group troops. Necessary information and imageries of target area were provided by the Military Operation Directorate well in time.

This force was heli-lifted by seven MI-17 and five Puma helicopters to Mianwali Base by 1800 hours **7th January 2004**. Six Cobra helicopters also arrived at Mianwali Base before last light. In the mean while 3 FAAR company moved from Multan and established

Forward Area Arming and Refuelling Point{FAARP} at Bannu by 0800 hours, on 8th January 2004. The night of 7th /8th January was spent for marrying up and arming the helicopters, meanwhile additional requirement came from 9 Division to heli-lift 60 combat troops from Razmak to Wanna and another 130 troops from Miram Shah to Wanna.

Operation Commences

By first light the ground troops cordoned the target area. Helicopters got airborne at 0700 hours. The formation was led by attack helicopters for route clearance. The force reached Wanna, one officer from 9 Squadron was stationed at Wanna for air traffic controlling and co-ordination. Pilots were briefed by the ground commanders on the conduct of operation. Later five MI-17 and four Puma helicopters took off for Razmak and Miram Shah to heli-lift the additional force. At 0915 hours General Officer Commanding 9 Infantry Division and Brigadier Shoukat Sultan Commander 116 Brigade were flown to the target area.

At 0930 hours the attack helicopters were called by the ground commander for fire support. These Cobras then remained in air till 1500 hours. Lieutenant Colonel Raza Farooq and Captain Khawar made the first engagement from Cobra. Later Major Hameed and Major Butt and then Major Asim, Major Zahid and Major Farrukh engaged the target.

At 1615 hours the operation was called off and all helicopters less one Alouette flew back to Mianwali. Later on 9th January 2004 all Aviation helicopters flew back to Qasim Base at 1700 hours.

Pilots who participated in this operation were

Brigadier Raashid, Commander Qasim Base, Colonel Nadeem Aslam, Lieutenant Colonels Noman Ghafoor, Adil shahzad, Raza Farooq, Mumtaz Zia and Shahid and Pervaiz Butt Majors. Safdar, Rehan, Imran, Fazal, Qazi, Hameed, Amir Raza, Umar Farooq, Sohail, Nadeem Ghous, Tanveer, Bilal Sarwar, Nadeem Sadiq, Asim, Butt, Chanzeb Jadoon, Nayab Khan, Humayun, Amir Peerzada, Jehanzeb, Asim, Hameed, Zahid, Farrukh, Anjum, Kamal, Imran and Altaf, Captains Kamran, Zubair, Khawar, Solat, Anser, Kashif and Mehtab

A total of 180 hours were flown consuming 80,000 litres of fuel, lifting 653 troops and 685 rounds of cannon were fired.

Operation Zerakai

The biggest operation conducted so far against the anti state elements involving thirty three helicopters including sixteen MI-17, five Puma, six Cobras, three Huey, one Lama, and One Alouette. It was conducted on 23rd /24th February 2004 in an area 12 kilometers South West of Wanna. The target area was a complex of 5-6 mud walled huts located in the foot hills of a valley.

On 22nd February 2004 a force of 300 Special Services Group troops was concentrated at Qasim Base. Meanwhile all aviation assets were also collected at Qasim. Necessary intelligence and imageries were provided by Military Operation Directorate. On 23rd February by 1800 hours all the helicopters and troops were flown to Mianwali Base. 3 FAAR established FAARP at Wanna and 2 FAAR Company established FAARP at Bannu.

On 24th February 2004, the intended start up time of 0540 hours was delayed by Military Operation Directorate for the want of latest of intelligence report. At 0605 hours the first wave of helicopters carrying 180 troops in nine MI-17 and three Huey took off supported by six Cobra helicopters. This force dropped the troops at target area at 0710 hours. The Hueys and Cobras provided aerial support around the clock for this force. Second wave carrying 120 troops in six MI-17 took off from Mianwali at 0700 hours and landed near target area at 0805 hours. All Cargo Helicopters then flew to Bannu for refueling.

At 1300 hours the ground operation was completed and de-induction of troops started which was completed by 1400 hours. These helicopters then remained standby at Mianwali Base till 29th February. In the same time period another Section consisting seven Special Services Group soldiers was dropped at Miram Shah by Huey on 26th February 2004

Army Aviation flew 257 hours and lifted 337 Troops.

Pilots who participated in this operation were

Lieutenant Colonels Sagheer, Asif Jah, Mumtaz Zia, Noman Ghafoor, Abid Saeed, Pervaiz Butt, Majors Basharat Noor, Arsalan, Sajjad, Kayani, Nabeel, Omer Mehdi, Rehan, Khattak, Tariq, Mubbashir, Mazhar, Shahid, Nayyab, Naveed, Satti, Shujaat, Suhail, Altaf, Ahsan, Kafeel, Azam, Hameed, Jehangir, Khalid, Tanveer, Aftab, and Chanzeb Captains. Adil, Ali Abid, Arsalan, Farrukh, Javaid, Solat, Kashif, Imran and Shams

Operation Hifazat

To protect strategic installations and established states writ in general area Sui, dedicated combat and cargo aviation support was provided from 12 January to 24 August 2005. Though extensive flying did not take place, however mere presence of aviation assets created the requisite deterrence for the miscreants and radiated strategic effects.

Operation Destiny

Aviation assets were placed in support of 12 Corps and Frontier Constablury Balochistan to carry out operation against Ferraris camps Balochistan since **14 December 2005**. 202 Aviation Group was assigned the overall responsibility. Due to the effective utilization of Aviation, so far 12 Ferrari Camps have been destroyed. With the integration of 50 Aviation, Squadron (BSP), FLIR system installed in Cessna Caravan was effectively utilized for the first time.

2006

Nawab Akbar Bugti former Governor of Balochistan had been challenging the writ of the state for sometime. His activities reached to a level where assassination attempts were made on the President of Pakistan during his visit to the area. State after failure of talks decided to impose its writ. It was code named as 'Operation Destiny'. A series of operation starting from January 2006 till final apprehension of Akbar Bugti were conducted.

4 January 2006. 'Operation Siakoh Eight' Cobra helicopters participated. Five Tows and Seven Rockets were fired during this operation

4-7 February 2006. 'Operation Al-Sart' and 'Operation Chashma Camp' (9 February 2006) were aimed at reduction of miscreants camps near Dera Bugti and clearance of route. Aviation assets for these operations were placed at Sukkar. Deputy Commander 202 Army Aviation Group, Colonel Raheel Hafeez Sehgal Sitara-I-Jurat, led the operation as ABC (Air Battle Capt).

12-13 February 2006. 'Operation East' and 'West Hill' was also planned to clear Dera Bugti – Sangsila axis. During a reconnaissance/surveillance mission own helicopter had a near miss from a surface to air missile fired on their Bell-412 helicopter.

1st March 2006. 'Operation Said Gai' was conducted at Saidgi eight pilot of 25 Army Aviation Air Assault Squadron and two pilots of 4 Army Aviation Air Assault Squadron participated in the operation. A total of 7.7 hours were flown by Bell-412 helicopter. A pitched battle took place between miscreants and the troops during this operation in which few helicopters received bullets hits out of which, helicopter piloted by Major (now Lieutenant Colonel) Najeeb Ahmed was severely damaged and scanner Havildar Naeem of 599 EME Battalion was seriously injured with the blessing of Allah both scanner and the helicopter survived the bullets/injuries. Major Umar Farooq Rana DAA & QMG participated in the operation as MI-17 pilot. The officer's heroic efforts of evacuating the Special Services Group troops from the heat of battle was applauded by all. His helicopter also received a number of bullets. he has been decorated with "Tamgha-I-Jurat"

13 Jun 2006. 'Operation Al-Barq'. State tightened its grip on the miscreants around Dera Bugti and surrounding area. Finally an authenticated report about the presence of Baram Dagh, grand son of Warlord Akbar Bugti was received. A massive operation consisting of six Cobras, four Bell-412 & eight MI-17 helicopter took part in it. Commander 202 Army Aviation Group, Brigadier Tariq Hussain Khan acted as ABC (Air Battle Captain). The location of Baram Dagh was named as BD Banglow. Pano Aqil was selected as Forward Area Base and Sui become Forward Operating Base. The operation was a partial success as the hide out was completely destroyed and a number of miscreants were either killed or captured. During the operation one MI-17 piloted by Major Basharat Noor and Captain Bilal Hussain met an emergency just eight miles short of target, after a safe landing, quickest possible recovery was made and the helicopter flew back to Sui. The dismal part of the operation was that due to improper search done by the ground forces, Baram Dagh managed to slip away. However, the daring action of Cobra and ABC on Bell-412 helicopter (Major Khattak) six Miscreant were captured by SSG troops.

1st July 2006. ‘Operation Al-Nasr’. Akbar Bugti’s location was confirmed at the hills north of Sangsila near the Bugti Murre tribal boundry. One company of regular infantry and 4 Commando Battalion were picked up from Pano Aqil and after refueling at Sui were dropped in the target area. eight Cobras, six Bell-412, eight MI-17 and two Puma helicopters were used in this operation. Force was landed after PAF Fighters had softened up the target. Operation was delayed due to bad weather. The target area was full of resistance and many helicopters received bullets hit, out of which. Lieutenant Colonel Abid Ali, CO 4 Army Aviation Air Assault Squadron had a near miss when fifteen bullets hit his helicopter while he was landing two bullets hit his seat but due to armour protection he remained safe. Due to extreme bad weather on 4 July force could not be picked up and on 5th July the de-induction took place Akbar Bugti and Baram Dagh both managed to escape taking the cover of darkness.

8th July 2006. ‘Operation Al Fateh’. Baram Dagh’s location was once again confirmed in general area Lehri. 15 miles west of Sangsila. Tactical Head Quarter was established at Sangsila. There was no time for reconnaissance or detailed briefing. six Cobras, four Bell 412, six MI-17 and one Puma immediately took off for Sangsila. As there was no prior planning and the target was on the run. It was a near catch as the vehicle of BD was located but he managed to escape on foot. On 9th Jul 2006 the force was de-inducted and helicopters flew back to Pano Aqil.

22-27 July 2006. ‘Operation Sun Rise’. The base of operation was Sibi, four AH-1F, four Bell-412 and five MI-17 helicopters participated in the operation. one company each of 40 Baloch and 28 Azad Kashmir Regiment was heli lifted from Sibi and dropped at target area.

23 August 2006. Successfully operations in Dera Bugti tribal areas compelled miscreants to move further towards north. Akbar Bugti. Baram Dagh and Balach Mari flee to Kohlu. After confirmation of their position, Law Enforcing Agencies planned to strike the final blow by the name of Operation Rahbar six Cobras five Bell - 412 and six MI – 17 helicopters were planned to undertake the mission. Lieutenant Colonel Abid Ali CO 4 Army Aviation Air Aslt Squadron conducted the operation as ABC. Akbar Bugti was expected to be in general area Kalgir-I-Daman near Karmo Wad While Cobras and Artillery provided fire support, MI-17 and Bell-412 helicopters dropped the task force in target area. Akbar Bugti’s cave was surrounded and on 26 August he was killed when his cave collapsed after a blast, probably some timed explosive was planted by Akbar Bugti in the cave. Dead body of Akbar Bugti was recovered on 30 August and on 31 August he was buried in Dera Bugti, He was a brave rebel. Due to the collapsing of caves four officers including Commanding Officer 2 Commando Battalion (Lieutenant Colonel Aamir), embraced Shahdat and two officers and two other ranks were seriously injured All these casualties were carried out on helicopters

21-23 September 2006. ‘Operation Nagau Ghar’ was planned on to capture Baram Dagh. The operation was conducted form Sibi. The operation got delayed as the cobra’s got some technical problems due to the height of the target. However, later that day the operation went as planned and the force was inducted. But Baram Dagh could not

North Waziristan Agency

North Waziristan Agency (NWA) had an area of 4,707 square kilometres with a population of 3, 61,246 (1998 census) thus an annual growth rate of 2.46%. There were 192,432 males and 168,814 females in the agency, literacy rate being 13% among males and 0.5% among females. Population density was 77 persons per square kilometres only South Waziristan Agency had a lower density rate than NWA among the seven agencies (SWA had an area of 6,620 square kilometres with a population of 429,841)²⁵⁴. The Uthmanzai Wazirs still formed 59% of population, Daur 39% with Mahsuds forming the remainder. There were 73000 Afghan refugees still living in the agency. Ibrahim Khel, Wali Khel and Mamit Khel were the three major Wazir Tribes with sub clans which included Madda Khel, Manzar Khel, Tori Khel and Macha Khel of Ibrahim clan, Bakka Khel, Jani Khel, and Kabul Khel being part of Wali Khel clan, Hassan Khel, Khaddar Khel, Bora Khel and Wuzzi Khel were integral part of Mamit Khel; all in all there 42 sub clans of Uthmanzai Wazirs in NWA.

Daur tribe composed of four main clans namely Dangar Khel Sayyids, Ozhi Khel Sayyids, Malizad and Tappizad. The last two are most populous and important. Malizad alone has 67 sub. There was not much of change in the areas of their occupation, they were living between Tanghrai Tangi near Tal on Tochi to halfway between Boya and Datta Khel; on the lower end of Tochi Valley they are known as Lower Daur and occupy the area from Shinkai Defile to Tanghrai Tangi. In upper Daur area (Malizad) their main clans are at Degan, Malakh, Boya, Hamzoni, Darpa Khel and at MiranShah where as in lower Daur they are at Idak, Tappi, Khaddi, Hurmaz, Mausaki, Hassu Khel and Haider Khel. Major difference between the Daur and Wazirs remained in the fact that Daur do not migrate

There were 250²⁵⁵ Malakans in NWA. In Datta Khel out of 38 malaks 27 were Wazirs, at MiranShah there were 46 malaks in which 32 were Daur and rest Wazirs, at Ghulam Khan there were 17 malaks out of which 4 belonged to Saiyidgi Tribe and 4 were Gurbuz, at MirAli out of 45 malaks 14 were Wazirs, at Spinwam all the 10 malaks were Wazirs same was the case at Shewa where all the 11 malaks were Kabul Khel Wazirs, at Razmak out of 20 malaks only two were Daur rest all Wazirs with Tori Khel having 13, at Dosalli there were 10 malaks all Wazirs and at Garioum there were four malaks all belonging to Tori Khel. Before 1997 these malaks used to elect the member of national assembly however now people elect them through votes. After Malak Jahangir Khan's (the one who presented Tochi Library with Encyclopaedia Britannica) death his son Malak Ajmal Khan became senator, Maulana Dindar (Boya fame) was the very first MNA to be elected by the people through votes (he died in 2010). In 2002 Maulana Nek Zaman was elected from Boya and in 2008 Muhammad Kamran a graduate of Gomal University was elected MNA. FATA had no representation in the provincial assembly. Article 247 of constitution provides the legal cover to the fact that no act of parliament can be applied in the agencies without desires of President of Pakistan.

254

103 Infantry Brigade analysis of the FATA, 2011.

255

103 Infantry Brigade Study, p – 114.

NWA surprisingly had 705 educational institutions out of which there were 405 primary, 67 middle, 31 high and 149 community based schools and one degree college at MiranShah having 814 students; there was one vocational college without having any classes, one commerce college, one commercial college, one teachers training centre with 14 students. There were 40,000 boys and 20,000 female students in NWA. MirAli had the highest number of schools for girls. The number of teachers in NWA exceeded over 800 with 458 male and 401 female teachers imparting education. Most of the schools were fake and on papers only, in lone girls high school there were 525 students and in the lone boys higher secondary school there were 700 students²⁵⁶

Telecommunication had taken its roots in the agency with MiranShah having 2582 telephone subscribers, Razmak 585, Datta Khel 398, Boya 200 and Tappi 100. In terms of medical facilities it had improved tremendously in last one hundred years there was one Agency Headquarters Hospital at MiranShah having 120 beds, a tehsil hospital at MirAli with 60 beds, one rural health centre at Spinwam with 70 beds and apart from these there were seven civil hospitals with 70 beds capacity, 14 basic health units, 49 mother-child health centres, 59 dispensaries and three sub-health centres. Animal care was not lagging behind, NWA has been famous for its bulls, by the turn of millennium there were one million cattle, four million sheep and goats, five million poultry and only 331 horses and 1500 camels but mules were over 14000 in numbers. There were 23 veterinary dispensaries, four veterinary hospitals, 12 centres and eight animal insemination centres. There was no specific shop for the sale of Hashish but almost all Charsis were found near Noor Medical Plaza.

Interestingly there were two serais in MiranShah, one was known as Tochi Serai where the family quarters of Tochi Scouts were constructed in 1922, few of the quarters were demolished in 1992 with an aim to reconstruct them again but then it kept on pending, other was known as Murghi Serai, located close to the General Hospital it was called Murghi Serai instead of its proper name of Hajji Saad Ullah Serai and market for the reason that Hajji Saad Ullah had been supplying chicken (Murghi) to Tochi Scouts since 1930's and as such is known as Hajji Murghi .

There were only four check posts of Tochi Scouts in the city, No 1 at Sargardan, No. 2 at Khawarsa Chowk, the chowk was named after the murdered political assistant who was assassinated here in mid-nineties, another check post was at Tochi Cemetery then Amin No. 1. For a short time a check post was established close to Amin No. 1 but the very next day one scout Havildar Rab Nawaz was killed by unknown assassin. There were separate anti-smuggling posts also for instance Saeed Post and Tol Khel.

On the western side the runway was the limit, there was another tube well across it but overall the area was a jungle and runway was used by the civilians for teaching driving to the novice, a ride at the end and back would constitute as one lesson costing Rupees 5/-. There was a political agent nursery at the northern end of runway and a post of khassadars as well which was known as Pakistan Post. There was no fence around the airport and natives were

using it as a short cut. The Eid prayers were held at the runway for which scouts would make the arrangement and all the population of the city would offer the Eid congregation here.

Area on the east of Idak Gate was the designated training area and also the Tochi Memorial, in late nineties Al-Azhar High School was established and next to it the political agent's colony. Tarmac on the west of fort was the parade ground. Area on the south east and south west was all barren and jungle with very few fruit trees.

Inside the fort the life was comfortable however there was shortage of water and overall majority of the living accommodation of all ranks needed repair and uplifting. It goes to the credit of all commandants from the turn of millennium that they have brought such drastic, radical and far reaching changes in every compartment of scout's life that the life span of fort has been enhanced for another hundred years but that will be covered later

All this shattered on the night of 11 September 2001 when a gory attack brought havoc on the Americans killing over 3000 innocent people particularly in New York City²⁵⁷. It was one of the most bizarre, daring, and meticulous and devastating in terms of historical impact that world had ever seen, heard or experienced in its modern, medieval and past history. There seems to be no parallel in history to describe it full entity, lone super power of the modern world was humiliated and made a laughing stock right in its own alley, it was a plot which would have baffled the Ian Flemings, David Lean and the very best directors of Hollywood. Any person would have been declared insane to even think that it is possible. Yet it was made possible and whole world saw with its own eyes the Twin Towers of World Trade Centre going down in heap of ashes and fire when Boeing aircraft one after the other rammed themselves into them. Minutes later the very symbol of world military the Pentagon was also hit when a Boeing crashed into its perimeter. The only plausible explanation that came to the majority of minds was that aliens had attacked the earth; it was not the case, attackers were human.

The attackers were identified as Saudi nationals who were alleged to be financed and trained by none other than Osama Bin Laden himself a Saudi national and believed to be residing in Afghanistan

Osama Bin Laden, 'Mesmeriser'²⁵⁸, no man in modern history other than Adolf Hitler is hated, debated, loathed, followed and adored more than Osama. As a young man in 1986 he came to Pakistan to take part in Afghan Jihad, he stood out from the rest of Arabs fighters because he was the richest among them apart from his height. Initially he settled in Peshawar and helped the mujahedeen through his wealth but soon the sense of adventure took him into the heat of the battle and he along with his Arab followers took active part in the fighting against the Russian more notably in Khost area along with Wazir tribesmen, it is here that he developed the intimate bond with Wazirs who were impressed with his fighting valour. Not much was heard about him for many years, he hit the headlines when in May 1998 American

257 Newsweek, 24th September 2001

258 Newsweek 24 September 2001, article by Rod Nordland & Jeffrey Bartholet.

fired cruise missiles on his suspected hideout in Afghanistan, one of the missile landed at Saidgi in North Waziristan not far from Tochi Scouts Post. *‘It was a hot May day, I was on duty at Ghulam Khan, few of us scouts were sitting outside on chairs when all of a sudden a thunderous noise and fire ball was seen at Saidgi area, after half an hour we came to know that the Americans have fired missiles at Zawara Markaz being run by Jalal Ud Din Haqqani followers, it was opposite our Girgit Post. At that time the markaz’s in charge was Maulana Obaidullah, from Saidgi Post at a distance of 3-4 Kilometres there was a Taliban Post. Later when I was at Faqiran Post there I saw a small boy who had collected the scrap of that cruise missile, I inspected it, the manufacturing date was 1984, and the parts were still movable’.*²⁵⁹

Operation Enduring Freedom²⁶⁰ was the code name American efforts to get even with the terrorists who launched the successful and most lethal attack on American soil in its living memory and also in written history.

Repercussions had to be there and they had to be quick and a lesson for all to know. ‘We may be the only one left in this war, that’s ok with me, we are Americans’ President George Bush after the attacks commented²⁶¹, this much Bush was sure that Osama Bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda is behind this attack but he did not had the proof and neither he needed one at this time, he wanted him out dead or alive. Osama was in Afghanistan a land locked country; barren, desolate about the size of Bush home state Texas. Mullah Omar the Taliban leader of the Afghanistan demanded a proof from Bush later however Omar agreed to put Osama on an open court of international justice, both demands were rejected by Bush. Something very similar was done by the Viceroy of India before declaring the Second Afghan War on 21st November 1878, the events leading to this war also started in the month of September 1878²⁶². Between 11th September- 7th October 2001 the Central Command of America (Centcom) under whose area of operation Afghanistan falls carried out all appreciation and put forward three plans²⁶³, the first one calls for destruction through air power only but finally the presence of ground troops and destruction using air power was approved.

Secretary of Defence Rumsfeld admitted ‘the hard fact was that America could not operate in Afghanistan without having allies’²⁶⁴. The fact was Afghanistan was not a country

259 Interview with Naib Subedar Sher Alam Khattak, July 2012 at MiranShah

260 Also known as Operation Infinite Justice, the Operation Enduring Justice began on 7th October 2001.

261 Bob Woodward, *Bush at War*, (New York, Simon & Schuster, 2002), p, 81.

262 *The Second Afghan War 1878 – 80*, Pakistan Army Education Press 1975, p – 2.

263 Michael Delong, *Inside Centcom, The Unvarnished Truth About the Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq*, Washington, Regency, 2004, pp, 27-39

264 Bob Woodward, *Plan of attack*, London, Simon & Schuster, pp, 6-14,

at all; there were no target to be hit as in conventional states or as in Iraq. President Bush remarked ‘what is the fun in hitting a \$10 tent with \$ 200 million worth cruise missile’²⁶⁵. There was no electricity, command and control centres, air defence weapons, telecommunication etc. What little was there it was not affecting anything, what was present on ground were 60,000 Taliban, a thousand of Osama’s Arab warriors and potential million Pashtun in tribes all ready to wage another war. To these tribes there was no difference in fighting against the Americans as from Russians

The air campaign or rather bombing started on 7th October 2001, in the first 76 days of operations till 23 December 2001, when sustained air operations slowed; the US flew about 6,500 strike missions over Afghanistan. About 17,500 munitions were expended on over 120 fixed target complexes and over 400 vehicles and artillery guns. A total of 57% of the weapons delivered were precision guided. Navy carrier-based planes flew 4,900 of the 6,500 strike sorties or 75% of the total. The Air Force, flying 25% of the sorties, delivered 12,900 weapons, over 70% of the total delivered²⁶⁶.

Pakistan had to deploy almost two corps along the border to stop the Taliban fleeing and from this point onwards an intricate and delicate situation took birth. Pakistan denied Americans right to cross into its territory in hot pursuit of Taliban and rather took itself to hunt them down but Americans were not satisfied with these arrangements yet they conceded to Pakistan. This was the most difficult period in the history of Pakistan because not only a war was raging on its western borders but simultaneously lava erupted on the eastern borders as well when a terrorist attack at the Indian Parliament on 13th December 2001 again pointed the fingers at Pakistan. India amassed her forces on the border and a nuclear war seemed imminent²⁶⁷.

OPERATION LABBAIK

On 13th December 2001, Indian Lok Saba was subjected to a heinous terrorist attack for which India as usual blamed Pakistan. By end December 2001, India had brought its armed forces on the border, a Nuclear War became imminent in the sub-continent. Pakistan now faced a two pronged threat on its Eastern and Western borders. The operation to counter the Indian threat was code named as ‘Labbaik’. Although both countries remained short of a full fledged war yet the tempers were so high on both sides that it could have started at any moment.

Qasim Base, First January 2002

265

Ibid

266

Operation Enduring Freedom <<http://www.wikipedia.org/>> (accessed 3-16 September 2012)

267

Shuja Nawaz *Crossed Swords Pakistan Army Its Army and the Wars within* (Oxford, Karachi, 2008) p- 549.

A conference was called upon in the Qasim Base Headquarters after which all the commanding officers along with the base commander, Brigadier Arif Nazir went for an aerial reconnaissance of their dispersal areas in the Ravi-Chenab Corridor. Next day the second in commands of the squadrons{21C} were heli-lifted to the area as part of the advance party. Second in Command{2IC} of 27 Squadron recalls

'On 3rd January 2002 Commanding Officer Lieutenant Colonel Shahid Nazir called me in his office and briefed me to go to Rahwali to mark the camp area, which he had reconnoitred a day before. He generally gave me the map square in which he wanted the squadron to be deployed and left other details to me. I was supposed to be back by evening. Gujranwala was damp and foggy. By evening weather turned so bad that we had to stay there. Meanwhile I got a message that advance party is reaching tomorrow; which they did by the noon next day led by the General Staff Officer Grade One Lieutenant Colonel Raja Shoukat. Advance parties consisted of 20 men of each squadron. The Punjab was in grip of severe cold and fog, it was so thick that, second seater marched in front of vehicles to guide them through.

Our area was a small wood with field of potatoes all around, all wet and ploughed. Without wasting time we got down to the job of digging. Laws of physics are as applicable on humans as they are on machine and the foremost is law of inertia. Till the arrival of main body on 10th January, we worked around the clock. Life started revolving around how many bunkers are still left without overhead protection cover. Weather was cold with mercury dropping down to zero at night along with fog phenomenon which persisted at times for days. In preparing the helipads the major irritant other than the potatoe fields was the pleas of farmers. Hot tea and Halwa was the only entertainment for us. On 5th January 2002, General Officer Commanding, Army Aviation Major General Azam visited us in the field, briefing was given to him under pouring rain.

After one week the main body arrived and life started taking more routine pattern. There would be morning parades, flying check outs, captaincy check-outs, durbar. Route Marches of 12-14 Kilometres added zen to the military life. The inter squadron small arms firing competition was of great thrill in which our squadron stood second. Daily routine started with Stand-To and then Meteorological /Air Traffic Control Brief. After this brief, the breakfast would be consumed which invariably had some kind of potatoes in it. In the day, pilots would spend the time in the cockpits going through the technical details. General Officer Commanding again came for an address, the highlight was the induction of new weapon systems and generally updating the pilots. These addresses were useful as they kill rumours which are always in abundance in any such scenario.

With the passage of time our area had to be reoriented due to climatic changes. Fields were now baked and the potatoes had to be taken out. We had so much potatoes that adjutant used to send the messages to the flight commanders by writing it on potatoes. We had a Company of Commandoes attached with the formation. They would spend the day with us discussing tactics and carrying out model discussions. In the end we would have a verbal orders drill and then actual flying of the exercise. There was an urgency in every thing, we carried out night flying, rapidly progressing from operating on the nearby Rahwali Airfield

to gradual operations in the field. There was a blend of experience among the pilots, few were captains on the helicopter, others had yet to be declared operational. There was a pair of night vision goggles of latest generation which we employed for the first time. It was fabulous because we could see in the darkness, the tents ,power lines, landing areas and troops guarding them. Same goggles would be used by the sentries for night patrolling. Our squadron had full equipment of nuclear, chemical and biological equipment thus we drilled its equipment and made all our camp according to laid down drills of NBCW due to which it started giving very conspicuous look, a kind of Star War. We also had central tactical exercises without troops {TEWT} for our intended missions of raiding Indian bridges, airfields, and headquarters. These exercises were more realistic and every one had the opportunity of speaking his mind out.

Life in the field became very enjoyable. There was no time for thoughts other than the missions for the day and coming days. We had the power line but television was seldom watched although troops had weekly movie for relaxation. In the evening games, volley ball was played religiously, friendly matches with the commandos were a regular feature, whom one day we doped with 'bhang pakoras', the field all around us was littered with the bhang. One thing different from the eighties was the presence of mobile telephones and the interest in the Internet which used to provide the latest weather report. By end February we were told to be ready for move back and then suddenly one day we were given the instructions to fall back to Dhamial'.

The army field headquarters were also established at Gujranwala with Lieutenant General Tauqir Zia who was also the chairman of Pakistan Cricket Board as the head of this headquarters. Only Tauqir Zia knows what kind of impression he was creating by abandoning the headquarters and flying out to Dubai to watch the cricket match. It had two impacts one was not to take the matter seriously and other that general is more interested in cricket than war. The news which in any case travels much faster in such environments as compare to the ordinary time were not encouraging because quite a time and money was spent on the renovations of the field headquarters.

Multan Army Aviation Base

High alert for Multan Base came on 3rd January 2002. On 9th January advance parties of Multan Base and Combat Group left for their operational areas led by Major Farhat and Major Rizwan. These parties reached Panjnad at 1800 hours, after losing their way around and staying the night in a rest house. By 10th Aviation Base was deployed in its area of operation. On 10th January 2002 all Aviation Bases were re-designated with Group Numbers in line with the deployment of the rest of Army. All aviation concepts practiced during Zarb-e Momin and Flying Brevet were now being tested in actual scenario.

On 31st January 2002. At 0800 hours, one combat flight of 33 Army Aviation Combat Squadron reached exercise area to conduct battle drill in the perceived areas of employment. First night battle drill was conducted by the same squadron on 1st February 2002. Certain aspects to improve recognition of FAARPS were highlighted in these drills. Like siting

FAARP with reference to some conspicuous landmark, firing of flares on arrival of combat helicopters and indications with the help of flags etc. It was concluded that there is a need to ensure more coordination between Combat Squadrons and FAAR Company as well as the concerned formation sent the right signals to all concerned.

Electronic Eye.

Army Aviation played a vital role in the collection of signal intelligence data about the enemy by flying for the first time its electronic warfare equipped MI-17 along the eastern border. This helicopter logged over 100 hours within a week. Late Major Imtiaz remained its captain during this time whereas the co-pilots included Majors Umar, Chanzeb and Ahmed. He narrated "We would get airborne from any of the desert airfield at night and then climb to 10,000 feet, after that we had a tiring flight of three and half hour. Landing in the dark again taking off and following same route we would fly back to the point of origin and this lasted for over ten days at a stretch. It required a lot of planning and co ordination between various flying and ground formations. Once we were challenged by own fighters as our all navigational lights would be off. Once I saw a hostile aircraft making passes, but to top it all we narrowly escaped own Ack Ack fire. All field formations were deployed and unprecedented secrecy and security was observed, no one knew where the other was. After landing we would find place and go for sleep. A signal detachment which was deployed around a tube well was our abode. Signals were operating the sets mounted in the helicopter. I also listened to the tapes which signals had deciphered, one Indian Major Nagra was having an affair with some Colonel Malhotra's wife at Bombay".

Anti Remotely Piloted Vehicle{RPV} Operation.

On 24th January 2002, during the daily evening brief in the field area, Captain Amir of 499 EME Battalion pointed out that he observed an Indian RPV making patterns overhead the camp. The news was both interesting and alarming followed by the apprehensions during the briefing session. The staff of the headquarters and other officers remained concerned during the evening walks but overruled it as an illusion later the threat proved to be real. All concerned were alerted and course of action to shoot an RPV was decided. To thwart reconnaissance missions of hostile RPVs likely to intrude into Pakistan air space, combat elements remained on Air Defence Alert for 60 hours at a stretch. Two scramble practices were also conducted with the PAF, However, coincidentally no RPV came during the period. One Puma No.1528 of 21 Army Aviation Squadron was modified to carry machine gun and be able to fire from air. One Alouette was also similarly tasked for this. Later these helicopters were placed at Sialkot and Bahawalpur for this purpose. 33 Squadron also flew Ground Control Interception missions during this time.

Indians Backed Off

India lost its nerves and finally backed off, Army Aviation Groups moved back to peace location on 7th March 2002. Corps Composite Squadrons remained deployed in the field for another two months.⁹ Army Aviation Squadron under Lieutenant Colonel Nasir Dilawar developed first ever dummy aircraft for deception purposes. Y-12 flew regular morale boosting sorties from Qasim to Karachi via Mangla, it also flew regularly to Quetta. The formations from distant stations were deployed along the eastern borders thus these sorties were much looked for and appreciated by all ranks. Troops were able to visit their families and be back after a long week-end. Casualty evacuations were also carried out by the aircraft in all sectors. It is worth mentioning that operational orders were delivered to all formations by Y-12 aircraft despite heavy fog prevailing. During this escalation period retired aviators pleaded to be included in the war machinery. They met GOC Aviation and volunteered to look after the camp and administrative affairs as the minimum, thus freeing the pilots exclusively for flying.

In escalation along Eastern Border Army aviation flew 1853 missions and generated 6190 flying hours

Pakistan took a major and most appropriate U turn in its policy, Musharraf was now more mature and took steps which apparently looked out of tune and on the behest of the Americans by the public which for two decades was brought up and groomed in a culture of superiority, where Islam had to be spread through the violence, under Zia and later propagated by General Hamid Gul the former ISI chief. The two nations went to a heightened military tension and later it was stepped down in an orderly manner by the mediation of the USA, but not before extreme violence devastated Kashmir with over 700 killed in state elections 'during the night of 23-24 March 2003 a group of some eight to 10 men dressed in army uniforms entered the village of Nadimarg, south of Srinagar, and took members of the Hindu Pandit community from their homes. They lined up and shot dead 24 of them, including 11 women and two children, outside a temple'.²⁶⁸

Musharraf finally gave up the militancy and by 2003 he went on to put forward a radical change in Kashmir policy by hinting at dropping of plebiscite condition and emphasising on autonomy of the region and free movement of people, on 6th January 2004 he met Indian premier at Islamabad and thus marked the end of Kashmir dispute temporarily. 'Prime Minister Vajpayee said that in order to take forward and sustain the dialogue process, violence, hostility and terrorism must be prevented. President Musharraf reassured Prime Minister Vajpayee that he will not permit any territory under Pakistan's control to be used to support terrorism in any manner'.²⁶⁹

Operation Blue Lagoon January – February 2002

In the aftermath of the 9/11 the stance of Pakistan was to seal the Durand Line to stop the infiltration of the Taliban into own territory something which had never been done in the past. One major reason of such an inability of previous regimes was not the lack of resources

²⁶⁸ Ibid, p.23.

²⁶⁹

but the social and cultural values of the North Waziristan and also of other agencies posed the main hindrance. The tribes were all treated as independent and sovereign states. Wazirs inhabit the area on both sides of Durand Line with seasonal migration as part of their life style for instance the Gurbuz Wazirs do come down from Khost towards the MiranShah in winter. The other lesson which had been passed down from the history since 1849 is the militancy of the Wazir tribes they have shown the tenacity of fighting the organised regular army for long period inflicting high rate of casualties on the troops thus it had always been a mixture of politics coupled with the military might that has been the scarlet thread of the area.

There were three main areas which had remained independent in all these years namely the Bangidar area west of the Ghulam Hassan Khan which is roughly thirty miles North West of MiranShah on the Durand line, second was the area west of Datta Khel and third being the area north west of Datta Khel. The mission given to the Tochi Scouts was to establish the posts on the Durand Line thus sealing the crossing points for the Taliban²⁷⁰. The troops earmarked for this operation apart from the integral troops of Tochi Scouts were wing of Shawal Rifles and one company of 25 Frontier Force. This apparently looks an innocuous task but anyone who has read and follow the history of the area will recall that similar aims desired in 1898 when Maizar incident took place near Datta Khel which later resulted in a full-fledged military operation that lasted for well over three years. Operation Blue Lagoon was the code name of the operation meant to seal these border crossing points, this was in fact a three tier operation planned and executed by the Tochi Scouts. For a better understanding of the overall efforts of Pakistan in war against terror it is to be remembered that the efforts had started from October 2001 onwards code name as Operation Al Mizan, in which Tochi Scouts were inducted from July 2005 onwards.

Operations of Tochi Scouts

The operations of Tochi Scouts in connection with the 9/11 started in December 2001 when instructions were received from HQ Frontier Corps to seal the borders. As a first step the main and more frequent entry points at Ghulam Khan were choked by the No.1 Wing, two sub sectors were created, one Ghulam Khan itself under command of Major Nawaz Ul Haq and the other sector Saidgi – Faqiran was under the control of Major Izhar Ahmed Choudhary. Observation posts were established at Tassa and Labejac in this Ghulam Khan sector. Additionally three guns of own field artillery were placed at Dardon along with one company size reserve force being commanded by Major Munir Khan. Over 13000 Afghans were refused entry into Pakistan after the American had started operation in Afghanistan in this sector alone.

In October 2001 Commandant Tochi Scouts Colonel Wajahat Choudhary presented his appreciation of the situation to the HQ Frontier Corps. Wajahat first identified the main routes emerging from Afghanistan into the agency, he pointed out following, Bangidar (NNE of MiranShah), Ghulam Khan(North of MiranShah), Naridag(NNW), Saidgi(NW), Zhwazagai(WNW) and Dwa Toi (West of MiranShah). He also highlighted that at present Tochi Scouts are holding areas short of these routes for the reason that all of them are

regarded as inaccessible areas for last one hundred years, these areas can act as harbouring places for the infiltrators. Wajahat very rightly read the social values of the valley and appraised the headquarters that there is a very sympathetic feelings prevailing among the people and if and when the local religious leaders declared Jihad against the America then there will be an outburst similar to the Russian invasion of Afghanistan. Already donations (Chanda) are being collected for the Taliban either in form of money, weapons or food. Regarding the Taliban, Wajahat collected the intelligence which figured out their strength in the neighbouring Paktiya Province in Afghanistan. It was not much, Khost was almost vacated with only two shops out of ten being opened and carrying out the business, in his estimate there were 400 – 450 Taliban soldiers in Khost area armed only with small arms with occasional artillery piece and 14.5 mm gun, in Saidgi area he estimated 30-35 Taliban with similar weapons. The major force was in the shape of Qaumi Lashkar which included Maulvi Abdul Khaliq of Matoon Tribe, Abdul Qayyum of Lakhand Tribe, Shahsawar of Tanai Tribe, Abdul Rehman of Zadrani Tribe and Jalal Ud Din Ghundai of Zadram and Khostani Tribe. In Khost the control of the city was in the hand of Taliban police known as Amr Bil Maroof and very strong anti-American feelings persists. Commandant Tochi Scouts very correctly read and highlighted that Taliban are Kandharis and as such are not dependent upon Khost, they want to move back to Kandahar; they have suffered so far very less casualties and are fairly intact and in the case of fall and reduction of Kabul and Kandahar these will spread out and fight a guerrilla warfare in the mountains. On the issue of refugees the commandant foresaw that since these camps will lack the water and food shortage thus the refugees will spill out to all parts of the agency. Most importantly he pointed out that any prolong war in Afghanistan will turn the feelings of natives into anti Pakistan and government installations and personals will be targeted and attacked. Jalal ud Din Haqqani was appointed as the commander in chief of the southern Afghanistan, he had already left the Tochi Scouts accommodation but his family remained there. This may look strange to the adherents of western way of warfare but this is what Frontier Warfare is all about where families are not targeted to put pressure on the opponent. In over hundred years of frontier warfare in the North Waziristan there is no record of any rape by either the government forces or of the tribes or even among the tribes during conflict. Men have been slaughtered their bodies mutilated but women have been kept out of the conflict, it was only Musa Khan who in 1919 deceived the Tochi Guard at Tut Narai by presenting him and his colleagues as women.

Commandant Tochi Scouts Colonel Wajahat Choudhary stressed that in the first step all inaccessible areas be occupied thus, it was approved.

In connection with events taking place in Afghanistan a company was sent to beef up the security at Dardoni (near MiranShah)on 21st November 2001 simultaneously digging of trenches also started along the Durand line for protection of own troops. From October onwards the American soldiers approximately 100 in numbers came and stayed at MiranShah, they were housed in the technical school building which incidentally is mere 100 meters away from the house of Siraj Haqqani Siraj Haqqani. Tochi Scouts provided American troops with protection. Havildar Saeed states that these Americans were provided with Khaki uniform of Frontier Corps and they jointly carried out search operations with

Tochi Scouts. Americans were referred as friends in all official correspondences of army and Frontier Corps.

Tochi Scouts routine training went as per planning and additional one week training was imparted conducted by Major Nawaz along with Captains Anwar Saeed, Akbar Alam, Akhtar Azam and Tanveer Husain.

For the sealing of border ahead of Datta Khel initial reconnaissance was carried out in civil clothes by the scouts operating from Datta Khel towards the Durand Line in Madda Khel area. Between 5 – 10 January 2002 plans were made by the Commandant Tochi Scout Colonel Wajahat Choudhary, he requested for additional two wings of scouts. On 19th January aerial reconnaissance of the area was conducted in the Mashaq fixed wing aircraft of 9 Army Aviation Squadron.

No. 2 Wing Bangidar 19 – 22 January 2002.

Bangidar is located fifteen miles north east of MiranShah and five miles east of Ghulam Khan, it is situated on the Durand Line and a major smuggling route originating from Khost in Afghanistan and leading to MirAli, MiranShah and Spinwam. Area is mountainous in nature having an elevation varying from 4500 – 6000 feet, important heights are Labbeji and Ding Sar. There are numerous tracks that originate from Afghanistan and leads into North Waziristan agency. There is no metallic road, the seasonal nullahs are major obstacles for any wheel and track movement; which is possible only on tracks, there are three tracks that originates from MiranShah, Mir Ali and Spinwam and all these join at Bangidar. Gurbuz Wazir is the major tribe inhabiting the area on both sides of Durand Line. Hassan Khel Wazir a sub tribe of Momit Khel (Uthmanzai Wazir) occupies the area approximately five kilometres south of Bangidar on MirAli & Spinwam approach. Turi Khel Wazir lives in area east of Bangidar.

In 1998 an operation was planned but then due to paucity of troops and perceived tribal reaction it was postponed, again in 1999 another operation was planned but abandoned at last moment as political administration feared a law and order situation and seek more time. In the aftermath of 9/11 another operation was planned to kill two birds with a single shot, to curb the smuggling and to stop the infiltration of Al-Qaida.

On 16th January 2002 aerial reconnaissance was carried out by the commandant Tochi Scouts and three other officers in the MFI-17 aircraft of 9 Army Aviation Squadron. On 18th January operation plan was formulated and approval of IGFC Major General Taj Ul Haq was taken, on 19th January operational orders were given by the Commandant Tochi Scouts. No 2 Wing under the command of Major Nawaz Ul Haq was the commander and he had additional troops in the shape of one company Tochi Scouts, one company of 25 Frontier Force and one field battery of Tochi Scouts in direct support which was deployed at Dardoni. Major Nawaz practically had to conduct the operation with only one company as his entire wing was deployed on posts; he was managing over twenty posts.

Operation commenced at 0700 hours on 20th January 2002 with two companies of No.2 Wing moving out from Ghulam Khan towards Bangidar along stony Stana Algad through the nullah with high gorges enroute, a route protection party was deployed in advance. At 0900 hours the troops reached a track nullah junction and a base camp was

established. Wing Commander Major Nawaz himself led one company to capture Ding Sar having an elevation of 5316 feet while Captain Shahid Khurshid led the other company towards an important and dominating knoll having an elevation of 5050 feet.

Major Nawaz after establishing a post of platoon strength at Ding Sar advanced forward with two platoons and established posts on adjoining high ground, having one platoon on Khaki Ridge (5150 feet elevation) and second on a mound (elevation 4850 feet) both were in place by mid-day. These three heights mutually supported each other with fire and observation, thus the main track coming from Bangidar was now under observation. On the opposing side the Chalwasti (tribal force) armed with heavy weapons still occupied the track, no exchange of fire took place.

On 21st January 2002 a platoon each moved forward towards the Bangidar area and established a foothold, there were few tense moments when Chalwasti initially refused to vacate the positions but on seeing the heavy weapons of the Tochi Scouts moving forward they withdrew. Tochi scouts improved the track and made it trafficable for four wheel drive vehicles. Equipment and stores required to construct the bunkers was also brought forward. Next day (22 January 2002) Pakistani flag was hoisted at Bangidar by the Commandant Tochi Scouts Colonel Wajahat Choudhary.

No.4 Wing - Tochi Pass, 19th January – 6th February 2002

An operation was hatched with an aim to stop not only inter-tribal war but also to make use of this opportunity by advancing towards the Durand Line and occupying the Dwa Toi. Sooner or later one of the tribe was bound to seek the help of Tochi Scouts, it was a game of patience and soon Khaddar Khel asked for Tochi Scouts intervention and help.

Dwa Toi

Coming back to Datta Khel, it was decided in the first week of January 2002 to make hay while sun is shining; to advance into inaccessible areas. By sunset 19th January 2002 the elements were in position at Datta Khel, a tactical headquarters was established, No. 4 Wing was the punch it had earlier handed over its own piquet at Thall, Amin, Ahmed Khel, Pawani, Khar Kamar and at Stara Spera to Shawal Rifles to muster own strength for the operation, battery of field artillery and company ex 25 FF was placed at Boya

First Phase. On 20th January in first phase of the operation one company of 4 Wing occupied the Patakhani Sar at 0830 hours under artillery fire cover. The force was divided into two groups by mid-day 1st Group under Major Mudassar occupied Chappari which is located north of Tochi River having an elevation of 5793 feet, 2nd Group under Major Shoukat Mustafa and Captain Saad Zafar headed towards Mama Ziarat and occupied Bajauri, Kotki ridge and Mama Ziarat by 1930 hours. Mama Ziarat is a beautiful village consisting of hundred houses in Tochi Valley inhabited by Khaddar Khel tribe. There was resistance from Madda Khel but no casualty was suffered by own troops.

Second Phase. It started on very next day (21st January), the malaks of Khaddar Khel and elders of Mama Ziarat & Baba Ziarat met the commandant who in turn asked for the details of the mines laid. Artillery was moved to cover the Dwa Toi, Maizar and Timore. Strict orders were given not to fire on the civilian population and permission of commandant

was required before firing any artillery gun. The codes of Frontier warfare were adhering in which fire was stopped on any person raising the white flag or vacating the firing trenches. Dwa Toi in Pashto means 'place where two rivers meet' it is located near Durand Line surrounded by mountains of Shawal and Afghanistan, water is in abundance, it leads to Lowara Mandi (12 Kilometres), Birmal, Razmak (30 Kilometres) and Gurweikht (13 Kilometres)

22nd January 2002. At 0830 the operation started with a platoon strength to occupy the Gharlamai in Madda Khel area, it was successfully accomplished by evening. The going was not smooth as Madda Khel employed rockets and missiles on the advancing Tochi Scouts especially in Mama Ziarat area. Another objective was to occupy the Sherrani Killi area which is again situated in Madda Khel territory, it had hundred houses, and it had to be abandoned due to heavy fire from the tribe. Artillery was not employed by the Tochi on the tribe mainly due to presence of civilian population; it was appreciated that any artillery fire if fired can cause substantial damage to the women and children

23rd January 2002. The firing between the warring tribes stopped, Tochi Scouts mainly used the day for consolidation and moving forward the artillery observers. Next day (24th January) the elders of Madda Khel also met the commandant and agreed to resolve their differences with the Khaddar Khel through the political agent office rather than resorting to violence. Next two days were hectic as political administration tried to resolve the dispute but to no avail and on 30th January the operation against Madda Khel resumed. 4 Wing spearheaded the operation employing its two companies led by the wing commander Major Mudassar. Two groups were formed, one headed by the wing commander headed towards the Pate Khine Sar and other under command Major Mudassar towards the Maizar area but both groups made little headway mainly due to heavy resistance offered by the Girh Madda Khel. Havildar Khan Wazir Khattak needs commendation as he along with his pioneer section cleared the mines. Operation was terminated at 1730 hours.

On 31st January 2002 the IGFC Major General Taj Ul Haq along with home secretary visited the area, he met the tribal Jirga of Madda Khel and Khaddar Khel, initially the outcome looked promising but later on the talks failed and Tochi Scouts was left with no other option other than to resume the operation which they did on 3rd February 2002.

On 3rd February 4 Wing resumed the action early in morning, two groups were formed, one under Captain Shahid Khurshid Mohmand moved south of Tochi River and occupied the height in Madda Khel area they included Pate Khine Sar(7321 feet), Niaz Sar(5500 feet), and also occupied area in Madda Khel tribe territory. More important was the advance of the second group under the Wing Commander Major Shoukat Mustafa which successfully occupied the Maizar and Dwa Toi area by the last light. It was an historic moment as these areas had remained outside the writ of the Tochi Scouts and political administration for well over a century. It was nostalgic in nature as almost hundred years ago the same area had successfully resisted the advancement of the North Waziristan Militia. Maizar is located at an elevation of 300 feet and had over 400 houses with water flowing through the streets.

On 4th February Major Shoukat Mustafa carried out the reconnaissance of the area and finally selected the ridge at Grid reference 582463 as permanent location for a platoon size strength post. On 6th February Commandant Tochi Scouts hoisted Pakistan flag in a simple but graceful ceremony at Dwa Toi and with this the Tochi Pass came under the physical control of Tochi Scouts for the first time since the very incursion of the British in the area that dates back to 1895.

Subedar Fazal Orakzai was performing the duties of pay naik then and he narrates *‘there was initially only a platoon strength of Tochi Scouts in Datta Khel and we have never ventured ahead of it, our wing headquarters was at Boya, when the operations started in August 2001 then a tactical headquarters was established at Datta Khel but still the wing commander used to come back at night to Boya, there was no fear of any attack from the locals. Move forward from Datta Khel towards the Miser and Dwa Toi was carried on foot in a single day, due to winter the day hours were short, one company moved at fast pace and other followed it. It will be wrong to assume that this occupation was entirely due to show of force rather politics played key role. When we reached Dwa Toi it was afternoon and a Jirga was in process, we maintained a distance and waited for the verdict of the Jirga. Some of them were in favour of allowing us to occupy and establish a post near the village and other were opposing it. Finally they reached a consensus in which Tochi Scouts were allowed to occupy the old piquet known as Farangi Post which had only ruins; it was the post which was occupied by the British. In short the elders had allowed us only what was there in the original treaty. The relations with the locals were very cordial, I recall one particular incident when myself and wing commander were coming back from Dwa Toi and at Maizar we were stopped by one man who did not allowed us to proceed further without having meal with him in his house, it was a lavish meal (Fazal is obviously unaware of the fact that in 1898 similar pattern was employed by the Maizar people to lure the British into an ambush). Our Wing Commander Major Shoukat Mustafa was quite adventurous and would try a new route every day, and then we had no fear and would travel at night from Ghulam Khan to Boya or from Boya to Datta Khel and back. I was performing the duty of pay naik, on 2nd of every month we would gather at MiranShah and collect the pay which was then distributed to all the scouts at all posts.’*

In an another recollection of the memory Naib Subedar Sher Alam who was then a havildar in Signals Platoon of Tochi Scouts narrates *‘Datta Khel Bazaar area was almost burnt, Khaddar Khel had burnt down a serai of Madda Khel but one mosque of serai was left intact because none could dare to touch it other being a petrol pump was left intact for the reason that both tribes had invested money in it. There was another mosque in the area which was managed by the Maulana Ameel Khan it was Khaddar Khel’s mosque and it had shops in the ground floor. In the initial phase of the operation I was in the detachment of scouts which was led by Major Mudassar Baig a courageous and brave officer along with the political agent’s assistant, we marched into Madda Khel territory. I was initially sent into Gul Azam Morcha area, when we reached Mama Ziarat we discovered that whole area has been mined by the Khaddar Khel for the reason that they were numerically inferior to their opponents thus to prevent surprise attack they had adopted this tactics. Our Pioneer Platoon Havildar Khan Wazir Khattak he breached the mine field with detector, the mines were green in colour*

and Russian made. We then entered into Sherrani Village where we lost our way, on our way back our civilian driver had a an attack of epilepsy and near Jani Pir graveyard he lost control of the pickup and rammed it into the high ground, we all were saved but driver was unconscious and later we evacuated him, he was sad to see us all alive because he confessed that from his perspective he had killed us all. Anyway we reached Gul Azam area where we were greeted with a burst of 14.5 mm machine gun manned by three men of the tribe, they warned us not to move up or they will fire, they said that they cannot allow us to move forward unless the tribe does not give the permission. We stayed for some time and tried to negotiate but they were adamant on their earlier statement thus we came back to Datta Khel where political administration made some arrangements about which I have no knowledge. Next day we went there again the morchas were vacant yet the arms and ammunition was there, there was a rocket launcher frame also which allowed these men to fire it from a standoff distance. Some of us were left at Gul Azam Post and rest moved forward to Dwa Toi, it was very cold and wind also started blowing and soon snow fall also started falling, we had no place for cover. Two of our scouts went into the nearby jungle to cut the woods for fire. Night was cold, long, windy and lonely; we hardly slept due to cold, in the morning it was snow all around, we had no water for even abulation, there was no latrines and we had no toilet paper as well. Later we fetched water from a spring almost two kilometres away. Similar was the condition at Dwa Toi where one of the scout had lit fire inside the tent which caught fire, there was ammunition stacked nearby but luckily they survived and also save the ammunition. At Pata Khina Sar which was a Madda Khel morcha there was a 100 mm Russian gun also which the tribe had taken up with the help of ropes.

No.1 Wing - KAZHA VALLEY 12 – 14 February 2002

Kazha Valley is situated west of MiranShah few kilometres short of Durand Line, initially the plan was to seal the area mainly to curb the smuggling but now with the aftermath of American war in Afghanistan it assumed double importance as its sealing would achieve not only to curb the smuggling but also put a check on the movement of Taliban and Al Qaeda elements into Pakistan. No 1 Wing under the command of Major Shakil was entrusted the task.

Operation started on 12 February 2002, it was a three phase operation. In the first phase artillery was deployed at Dougha Khulla under the command of Captain Ijaz. The post was established on a high mound 300 feet relative to surrounding area on the track Khar Qamar – Lowara Mandi, first phase was over by 0900 hours. Khar Qamar situated few miles west of Boya became the base of operation.

In second phase another post was established at Walgi by 1045 hours in Ismail area along track Khar Qamar – Lowara Mandi, it was also a platoon size post but it was having an elevation of 1300 meters. One of the major advantages of both the posts was the close proximity of fresh water, in case of Walgi it was only 50 meters away, moreover fresh ration was made available to the troops by the contractor mainly due to close proximity of track.

By 1230 hours the third phase of the operation was achieved by establishing a platoon size post at an elevation of 1600 meters, it was also on the track Khar Qamar – Lowara Mandi , it was named as Shakil Post. It had to rely upon the donkey transport for supply of

fresh water. Initially the locals of the area provided the water to the post. By 1530 hours the last phase of the operation which was establishing of post at an elevation of 1800 meters near Lowara Mandi, it was occupied by two platoons, the post dominated the village of Lowara Mandi and also had a visual observation of the Durand Line. One major limitation of the post was the water source which was three miles away.

*'Opening of area along Khar Qamar – Lowara Mandi was an interesting experience, all tribes living along the said axis gave no resistance, officers and troops of Tochi Scouts were warmly received by the tribal chiefs and tribesmen of different tribes in their respective areas with traditional tribal culture, officers were presented with turbans and honoured with lunch and dinner along with the troops. A great reception was arranged for the commandant Tochi Scouts and political agent North Waziristan Agency on their visit which took place on 14th February 2002; they were garlanded and presented with turbans amidst aerial firing. By the time these two officials reached Dwa Toi their convoy numbered over hundred vehicles in which over ninety vehicles belonged to locals who had also joined in. Pakistan flag was hoisted by the commandant in a graceful ceremony.'*²⁷¹

Not so Trivial Affairs

Pakistan and America despite sharing the common goals in the period still had differences and the major irritation point for NATO was the Pakistan's stance on the integrity of its border. Pakistan made it very clear from the start that it is very much capable of looking after the border on its side; action speaks louder than the words. The vigilance of the Tochi Scouts in the area of responsibility along the Durand Line even in that period of friendship later proved significant in thwarting the claims of the Afghan government in the readjustment of the Durand Line according to their wishes. There were two types of operations being conducted simultaneously, one within the North Waziristan Agency mainly confined to the MiranShah City and adjoining in which the Deeni Madrasah were being searched for the Al Qaeda operatives; in this the political administration, regular army elements and Tochi Scouts took part. These were mainly being conducted on the intelligence tips. The other was the American operations in collaboration with the Northern Alliance troops close to the border. In this the tendency of the Americans was to cross over the border, air violations also took place some of which it seems were not intentional rather the layout of the border itself void of any physical recognisable feature was the main cause. There were no communication arrangements between the Americans and the Tochi Scouts Posts which were all along the 60 kilometres border and it entirely depended upon the judgement of the posts commander to handle the situation as they deemed satisfactorily. The air of good will was there thus on almost all the occasions the issues were resolved amicably. With the passage of time the drills and standing order procedures were modified and drafted by both countries to cater for any eventuality; as a thumb rule the Americans were trusted and treated fairly but the Northern Alliance troops were looked with suspicion.

On 7th April 2002 in the evening a civilian Khuban Momit who has been living in Dwa Toi since two generations walked to the Tochi Scouts and narrated over a cup of tea that

‘ In the morning at 1100 hours he and his friend Murgahi both cattle owners had gone as usual towards the west with their animals to cut the wood, after half an hour they saw approximately a dozen Farangi soldiers , who made them halted at some distance and using sign language carried out a search of them, there was a Pashtu speaking soldier as well who told them they are looking for the Al-Qaida personals and there is a cash award for any one passing the information, they gave them the edibles also ’.

Madrasah& Ulemas

Islamia Madrasah is located near Match factory on the eastern fringes of the Tochi Fort. On 20th April 2002 the very first raid on a seminary was conducted at 2200 hours on the request of political agent, an under strength company force of Tochi Scouts was employed. Only one person was apprehended later he was declared White which meant that he is clear. But this was the beginning as on 22nd April at 0730 hours a huge procession of Taliban and Ulemas blocked the road near match factory; they burnt tyres and protested against the raid conducted on the Islamia Madrasah. There were four pick-ups loaded with rocket launchers and grenades. Maulana Zakria announced that American soldiers are deployed in the fort (a reality) and he also declared Jihad against them and threatened that any American soldier seen would be fired and shoot to kill, however the procession peaceful dispersed at 1315 hours. This was the beginning of the long story in which the Match Factory became and played a central role as far as the events regarding the MiranShah city are concerned.

From this search operation onwards an unprecedented form of violence started taking birth against the Tochi Scouts, something which for all practical purpose was buried with the burial of Fakir of Ipi. On the night of 23/24 April at 0245 hours Ismail Khel Post was hit with the small arms fire from the northern direction, it lasted for another half an hour. In retaliation a search operation was launched with an under strength wing strength at Dande, Dar Ul Uloom Haqqani Madrasah, none was arrested or apprehended but few documents were captured which threw feeble light on the coming days; this operation was conducted on the intelligence information of Americans. Month of May was peaceful and life went as usual with scouts enjoying the usual Jaleebis in the city shops and playing volleyball with them. Americans remained at the camp with their officers at times being accommodated in the mess. One house at Toll Khel was searched with nothing to report about

On 18th May 2002 another search operation was conducted by the Americans with the help of Northern Alliance troops across the border in Tanghrai Killi , they apprehended certain arms and ammunition, the situation took a turn when they tried to enter the Zerai Village where the locals stood up with the arms and this combined forced had to move back. Next day two American Helicopters landed at Tanghrai Killi

On 1st June at 0600 hours a joint raid was conducted with army in which one company of Tochi Scouts also participated; object was Qutab Khel near Chashmai Bridge with an aim to arrest the foreigners and Taliban but again nothing suspected was found and force returned empty hand at 0800 hours. In the city the peace was temporarily broken on the night of 18th June 2002 when one rocket was fired from van stand; it landed in general area Toll Khel, another similar incident took place at Boya on 24th June when two rockets were fired near Asha Baba Ziarat, two more rockets were also fired on same night at MirAli which

landed near Razmak Gate, however these were dud , later defused by Tochi Scouts. Jamal Khan a resident of MiranShah had the reputation of a first class arms dealer his house and godown was searched in a joint operation on 1st September 2002 but nothing substantive was found.

By start of November 2002 Americans had erected posts across the border at Zawar Killi and also opposite the Alwara Mandi, it was at Alwara Mandi that the first incident of firing missiles from own side took place when on 23rd November 2002 at 2215 hours seven rockets were fired on their location by unknown tribesmen followed by 14.5 mm gunfire, in retaliation the fire also came from their end and four rockets landed near own camp thus a firing duel started which lasted for half an hour in which both sides exchange fire. On the same night one fighter aircraft also flew in the area and fired one rocket. Next day at 1315 hours three American Cobra helicopters violated own airspace by flying two kilometres inside another flight of their helicopters dropped ten soldiers near Doctor Najeeb's clinic for search operation and then flew back. On 3rd December 2002 two American officers along with ten other ranks paid a visit to the Alwara Mandi Post where Captain Javed Iqbal had a meeting with them, the major issue was the communication. This lack of communication resulted in having another meeting on 5th December because on 4th December two rockets were fired at the Pakistani Post but Americans clarified that it was not their deed. On 11th December 2002 the Americans closed their camp opposite the Alwara Mandi and same was occupied by the Afghan National Army.

For next six months (June 2003) the situation remained calm, the activities of the American and Afghan troops remained inside their own border although at times their search operations, landing and flying of jet and helicopters was quite close to the border line but still it was within their own territory. At times one odd mortar shell did fall into own territory as on 31st May 2003 at 2140 hours one Afghan shell landed into own territory near Bangidar, again on 3rd June 2003 two American helicopters entered into Pakistan territory at 1130 hours near Kunar Sar, on 5th June 2003 one Afghan Fighter aircraft violated own air space 800 meters near Alwara Mandi. The one major incident of border violation occurred on 15th June 2003 when ten soldiers of Afghan Army were crossing into own area near Bangidar but on pointing out by the Tochi Post they immediately left the area. It was on 1st October 2003 when the very first mention of Remotely Pilot Vehicle was made, it was reported that it had hovered near the Ghulam Khan for eighteen minutes.

Thus the year 2003 also ended without any major operation or mishap either by the Tochi Scouts or by the forces across the Durand Line. There was extensive patrolling by the Afghan and American forces all along the Durand Line but all their actions remained within their own territory.

Saidgi Operations- January 2005

On 2nd January 2005 a predator of America had crashed inside own territory near Saidgi; almost a reverse of 1987 when Tochi Scouts had to retrieve a crashed F – 16 from inside the Afghan territory. The Tochi Scouts under the command of Major Hanif along with

106 scouts, one major of ISI, two Friends²⁷² and one captain along with three soldiers of SSG reached the site and were busy in finding and collecting the wreckage and parts when they came under the fire of long range weapons and mortar shells of Afghan National Army across the border from Mughalgai Camp, opposite to our Girgit Post. Lance Naik Shah Hussain Turi spotted a shining metallic part and he descended down to collect it when he was hit by a bullet, he went down without uttering a word, Lance Naik Aziz ur Rehman Bangash saw him disappearing and he shouted to him but getting no reply he moved forward when he was hit by a bullet in his thigh; he survived however Shah Hussain embraced shahadat. Now own troops also started returning fire and meanwhile they were busy in gathering the debris, job was almost over when Sepoy Noor Shad Khan Afridi was hit by a shell but despite his injuries he remained in position and made sure that his fellow scouts are able to retrieve and accomplish the mission. They were able to retrieve the camera, radio, antenna, power supply, engine parts, wings, one destroyed missile and two timer fuse igniter

The party arrived back with two injured and one dead to Saidgi Post. Commandant Colonel Bangash was at Peshawar he arrived back at evening and next day moved to Saidgi with additional company strength. A showdown with Afghan was on hands.

On 3rd January the force (Commandant, Wing Commander, Battery Commander, Adjutant, thirty scouts, two field artillery pieces, two three inch mortars) reached the same spot and was fired upon but this time Tochi Scouts were ready and burning with revenge, resultantly own artillery fire was called upon the Afghan Post and similarly a physical attack was also launched on them in which 15 Afghan soldiers were killed and nine other were injured, mortar position was utterly destroyed so was their headquarters. Tochi Scouts fired 100 rounds of field artillery, 30 bombs of three inch Mortar, 80 rounds of 14.5 and 235 rounds of 12.7 mm gun. Afghan National Army replied back with 20 bombs of mortar, four rockets and few bursts of heavy machine gun

In the aftermath of the operation a flag meeting with Americans was held at Ghulam Khan in which the issue was discussed threadbare and main cause and point of agreement reached was to improve the communication level among the bilateral. The end result was that whereas the behaviour and conduct of Americans was acceptable the Afghan National Army was treated as persona non gratia.

Dewgar Operation

On the night of 3/4th March an operation was conducted jointly by the Tochi Scouts and Special Service Group (SSG). At that times there were reports, rumours, speculations and apprehension that majority of Taliban are hiding in the close proximity of the Durand Line. The operation was mainly conducted by the SSG and Tochi Scouts was mainly responsible for providing safety for the extrication of the force from target area till MiranShah by deploying piquet and patrolling of the route. Tochi Scouts two companies reached the target area at 0845 hours. Tochi Scouts also evacuated the injured women and children.

²⁷² Americans were referred as Friends in all correspondents; the term remained in use before American attack on Salala Post in 2011.

MirAli- 26 March 2005

In the same connotation another search operation was conducted independently by the two companies of the Tochi Scouts at MirAli near Babar Post, the operation went smoothly and half a dozen men were arrested. The things went wrong after the operation when a mob of 2000 mostly students of religious seminaries along with the elders surrounded the force taking up hostile positions, they demanded the release of the suspects with dire consequences in case of non-compliance. It was a volatile situation, powder keg waiting for a flash to explode. Like nay mob there were noise, urging by miscreants to open fire and there were sane voices which were trying to restore some kind of normalcy. Commandant Tochi Scouts Colonel Bangash very sensibly read the situation and through his reasoning with occasional references to Pashtu proverbs and from Islamic history was able to take out the force without any firing of shot. This is a classic example of Frontier Warfare where force is not the answer to all queries, at times one has to retreat, one has to use his brain and power of logic and natives do understand all this.

April 2005

In April - May 2005 border reconnaissance was carried out and certain gaps were identified which allowed infiltration to the miscreants; it was decided to close these gaps by establishing new posts. In the Ghulam Khan area Zangurai Narai – Shinkai Khullah – Tappi, Bangidar – Ghorostai Algad, Bichi Narai – Tur Khullah Algad and Solak – Kharsin Narai – Nazar Baig Killi were identified and in Boya, Zawan Pul – Gharlamai, Kund Sar – Wazhagai, Lagharkai Narai – Maidan and Dadum – Zorium – Gharlamai gaps, in the Alwara Mandi sector the gaps were identified between the Border Post No.4 and Lorang and between Astaghai – Alwara Mandi – Dwa Toi areas. As a result new posts were established and area of operations of the wings was redistributed and plan was made to rotate the wings also, joint posts were also established under which 260 FC troops, 240 army troops and 55 Khassadars were deployed on these posts. The major irritant of establishing new pots was in the matter of supplying water to them for which additional resources were required, khassadars had to be recruited. These posts later came to be known as NAS Forts and each fort cost around 17.6 Million Rupees, brick wall of each posts cost about extra 3.8 Million Rupees.

A study period was also conducted by the Tochi Scouts with an aim to understand and highlight the security environments of North Waziristan Agency, it was conducted on 14th April 2005, Captain Waseem gave the historical perspective of the agency, Major Fawad covered the post 9/11 scenario and existing security environments and Commandant Colonel Bangash had the analysis. The brief summary is that due to the operations in Afghanistan the Talibans shifted, migrated and took refuge in the Waziristan. Army operations in South Waziristan from 2002 onwards have shifted these groups into North Waziristan. Military Operations were conducted jointly by army and FC during March 2004 in SWA were initially resisted by the Ahmedzai Tribe but later they along with Mahsud Tribe both came on board. However the aerial strike on 9th September during which 60 odd Talibans were killed inside the Mahsud Tribe changed the scenario and turned them against the government. Abdullah Mahsud and Baitullah Mahsud both are leading anti-government stance and had kidnapped three Chinese engineers working on Gomal Zam Dam. Government demanded the handing

over of not only the Chinese but also of both leaders as well which Mahsud Tribe refused. Thus due to intensity of operation there the miscreants have shifted into NWA especially in MirAli area. Number of Madrassa in NWA are the largest in Pakistan. Idak Madrassa, Maulvi Saleem Gul of Spinwam, Haqqani Madrassa, Dande Madrassa and Degan were highlighted as hot trouble spots.

In the month of April the frequency of sabotage activities increased in the agency but bias towards IED's. On 14th April alone there were two incidents one in MiranShah where an anti-tank blasted which took off the hand of a civilian and also at MirAli where an IED was exploded. But it was the beginning as with the passage of time the frequency increased further more reaching a peak in June 2005.

21st April 2005

A joint operation was conducted by the Tochi Scouts and SSG at Haider Khel in MirAli. It was suspected that foreign elements are hiding inside compound; Tochi Scouts were employed for outer cordon and for route protection by providing the piquet

Search for Haji Yaqub – 2nd June 2005 (Khushali Tori Khel)

Haji Yaqub was an active supporter of miscreants supplying them with arms, ammunition, money and safe places. His zone of operation was in MirAli area. In the last week of May , Tochi Scouts were given the verbal warning of the impending operation , the own intelligence outfit started gathering information , on the 1st June an informer gave the news that Haji Yaqub is likely to visit a nearby village on 2nd June. On the night of 2nd June 2005, six officers along with commandant reached MirAli where at 2300 hours two companies of Tochi Scouts moved silently out of the fort and by 0130 hours had completed the inner and outer cordon at Khushali Tori Khel Village. Haji Yaqub was believed to be in a mud house compound, which was breached after necessary procedures were adhered which mainly ensures safety and dignity of womenfolk but it also gave Haji ample time to escape through a tunnel. The search which commenced at 0400 hours in the presence of political agent and lady police thus failed to achieve their mission. However nearby compounds and madrassa was also searched but to no avail.

On 4th June the ten prominent local representatives led by Maulvi Rukn ud Din met the commandant and assured him of their support, however they also put forward certain demands which included lifting of the army check post on the Spinwam Road or to hand them over to the Scouts, their another complaint was against the intelligence agencies alleging that they are teasing them by through telephones asking for reports. On 16th June the political agent too had a meeting with the malaks of the agency, they all were the real kingmakers of the agency and included names from almost all Wazir Tribes very few Daur were also present.

On 10th June an unfortunate incident happened at No.4 Wing when one of its scouts Lance Naik Tariq Bangash committed suicide by shooting himself. Reasons could not be ascertained.

Haqqani Madrassa Search 11th June 2005

On 11th June a search and cordon operation was conducted independently by the Tochi Scouts to apprehend the foreign miscreants at the Siraj Haqqani Madrassa at Dande Darpa Khel. The operation was set on move almost a week before, the intelligence agencies were keeping a close watch on the madrassa. On the night of 10th June two companies of Tochi scouts marched out of Tochi Scouts, they secured the road and established an outer cordon. One command post was established at the abandoned Afghan refugee's camp which is almost at the end of runway. The actual madrassa which in fact had three distinct compounds one known as Haqqani compound, other as Madrassa and third the mosque are situated on the western side across the road from the runway. There are clump of trees which shields these compounds and one has to walk a kilometre on dirt track to reach them. An algaad passes through them separating the Haqqani compound from other two, moreover this compound I situated at a higher ground. Another cordon was established encompassing all the three structures. Political administration, khassadars and intelligence representatives were also present during the search. Nothing objectionable was found. Another operation at the same very place was launched and conducted in September 2005, but more about that later²⁷³.

Diffusing a Bomb 14th June 2005

Miscreants planted a bomb close to Alwara Mandi with an aim to cause havoc on the military convoys, it was placed on the katcha side of the road, but it was unearthed by the Tochi Scouts who were given tip by the local source, Tochi then had the road blocked on both ends and their Pioneer platoon disabled it.

First heliborne operation in NWA

On 2nd July 2005 the first heliborne operation was conducted in the NWA, more than eight helicopters took part in the operation during which 120 SSG troops were heli landed at Macha Madda Khel area. However only persons were arrested both Wazirs, not much of weapons were found, only one RPG-7, six 82mm mortar bombs, 13 grenades and certain minor items as well.

Haqqani Searched Again 11th September 2005

Haqqani Madrasa remained a thorn in the eyes of law enforcing agencies, majority of the people who were apprehended had the links with this madrassa, thus again on the night of 11/12th September 2005 another raid was conducted on this seminary. There were reports that three close aides of Haqqani are present inside including Abdullah Mahsud. Two battalions of army and two companies of Tochi Scouts were hurriedly launched into the search and cordon operation, secrecy and quick reaction was the key to the success thus planning was kept secret. The plan envisaged Tochi Scouts to put into force an inner cordon, army at outer cordon and finally the SSG, political administration and lady searchers to carry out the search. The Haqqani seemed to have nine lives of a cat because he was not present and neither were his three close aides who were reported about. The operation went as per usual but in one compound the inmates refused to come out citing the purdah, it took almost an hour of negotiations which were mainly conducted by the commandant for the reason that he

²⁷³ Tochi Scouts Intelligence Record of same date.

was the only one among the senior officers to know Pashtu and as such could communicate with these people, he was able to convince them to let the lady searchers have a search. Although the wanted men were not found, but as a consolation large cache of arms were recovered and confiscated this included equipment required for making IED's as well. Thirteen persons were also arrested. Another search operation was conducted in the area by the Tochi Scouts and army on 14th as well but nothing worth mentioning was gained.

The key to the search of all the operations and madrassas was the intelligence but as is obvious from the history that it is never fool proof. The time between the first gathering of intelligence and time spent in planning and subsequent move generally is enough for these wanted men to disappear into the wilderness. Fakir of Ipi was never traceable for eleven years despite the best effort of British and Afghan government, Aarsal Khan was never traced too.

An interesting event took place on 14th September when school children pointed out an anti-personal mine placed near Afzal Petrol Pump, one of the boy had while kicking the ground in a youthful manner saw the mine, they reported to the Khassadars who in turn informed Tochi Scouts, pioneer section later diffused it.

Khatti Killi Operation 29th September – 2nd OCTOBER, 2005

This was the biggest operation till to date in North Waziristan Agency for the reason that for the first time Army Aviation Cobra attack helicopters and air force was also employed, although their employment was not part of original planning. It was conceived as a minor operation in line with the other operations conducted so far but in the context of the insurgency it attained an importance much more than what it merited. A series of attacks started in August 2005 on the army and FC Posts starting from night 29/30th July when three rockets were fired at MiranShah Fort from behind the Kalanjar Top, one of the rockets landed at the Signals Lines but there was no damage. There was a gap of almost a fortnight before the next attack came on the night of 19/20th August when again three rockets were fired at the Fort, on 4th September, four rockets were fired at the Fort they were RPG-7s and till the night of 22/23 September there were attacks on each night the numbers of rocket fired never exceeded beyond five at one time

Maulvi Sadiq Noor is a young man of mid-thirties (37 years old) who was living and is still residing in a small village by the name of Khatti Killi (also known as Khare Killi in the native and is marked on the map as Khare Killi) which is located almost 15 miles west of MiranShah on the southern bank of Tochi River in Upper Daur Valley. Sadiq Noor was a confirmed abettor of foreign miscreants; he was collecting funds for them, providing them with training and recuperation facilities. He was fond of riding horses, his guide and steno. was a student of his own madrassa by the name of Faqir Muhammad, Sadiq had a double pick up as well which had the registration number of 976²⁷⁴. On 16th September 2005 officer commanding military intelligence met director general military intelligence at Peshawar at 1100 hours and go ahead of the operation was given after pondering over the

²⁷⁴ Tochi Scouts own intelligence report dated 12th August 2005. (Tochi Scouts had established an integral intelligence set up from 2003 onwards)

intelligence reports. In the initial briefing it was decided to have Commandant Tochi Scouts as the force commander, with outer cordon being under the command of second in command of 33 FF who would also be responsible for the quick reaction force and blocking positions, one major of Tochi Scouts will be responsible for the inner cordon. The indication of target was the responsibility of the officer commanding military intelligence.

Tochi Scouts had five integral wings additional FC force attached was in the form of one wing from Swat Scouts, one wing from Thall Scouts, one special operations group company and one armoured troop. In terms of artillery apart from own integral field battery one medium battery of Thall Scouts was also placed under command. Out of this artillery firepower, four medium guns were deployed at MiranShah, three field guns were at Wacha Bibi and two were at Baramand. There were 52 posts for the MiranShah Garrison only out of which 26 were for the Fort security and 16 posts were on the outer cordon and 10 posts were in the inner cordon, all in all 104 scouts were deployed for the fort security. From the attached wings 258 scouts of Thall Scouts and 289 scouts of Swat Scouts were deployed for road protection duties. Thus two companies which were managed from various posts and piquet were earmarked for any impending operations²⁷⁵.

There are two routes leading to the village, one along the main MiranShah – Boya-Datta Khel Road; in this case from Boya Bridge one has to back track almost five miles to reach the village walking along Muhammad Alam Kot, Bastigra Narai and reaching Khatti Killi which is situated in a re-entrant on a higher ground on the banks of Khaizai Algad. House of Sadiq Noor is located further ahead almost a kilometre passing through Dillipuri Village Other route leads from MiranShah- Isha- Thal Piquet and then follow the road leading to the Boya along the southern bank of Tochi River coming across Khozai & Panekzai Villages before encountering Sadiq Noor's compound. Task was simple; to apprehend Sadiq Noor either from his madrassa or from his residence and simultaneously search & demolish the madrasa, arrest or kill the miscreants and if possible to gather intelligence related documents. Intelligence reports confirmed that the compound is not defended by more than fifteen miscreants.

Two companies of 27 FF, one platoon ex 4 Commando Battalion of SSG and one company of Tochi Scouts were ear marked for the operations, 30 Khassadars and two lady searchers were also part of this force, assistant political agent and muharrar were also integrated. Two Cobra helicopters and two cargo helicopters were also available on call.

Operation was envisaged in three phases, in the first phase the move from MiranShah and debussing at Boya Bridge moving towards the Khatti Killi from west, in second phase establishment of cordon and blocking positions, this was to be performed by the 27 FF. In Phase Three the political process was to be initiated with the help of political administration. Search was part of Phase Four and disengagement and move back were the last part of the operation. It was perceived that by the end of the evening it will be over. Operation was envisaged at the first light; thus move started at the midnight.

²⁷⁵ Briefing by Commandant Tochi Scouts to GOC 7 Infantry Division on 21st September 2005 at Miranshah.

Brigade commander Brigadier Ghayoor was on leave, the standard battle procedures were not strictly adhered as the operation was too obvious; in fact from the onset of operation in the NWA they were seldom adhered in spirit. The very warning which was given by the Tochi Scouts in the April briefing highlighting the lack of communication to be a catalyst was about to turn true.

Conduct of Operations.

27 FF was inducted at the last moment, the new commanding officer Lieutenant Colonel Tahir Wafai had taken over the command hours before the operation and as such had no reconnaissance of the area, his second in command had gone on leave and the officer had never been in the area before. Tochi Scouts one company was led by the Commandant Colonel Bangash, they initially moved on transport from MiranShah and disembarked at Boya Bridge where the other company joined in on foot from Boya.

Troops debussed short of Boya. At 0350 hours on 29th September the Talibans opened fire on the troops who were marching towards the Khatti Killi. The main force on the other hand was moving forward with FF Company leading followed by Tochi Scouts with SSG in the rear. As they moved forward in hours of darkness they came under fire from adjoining hills on the right side of direction of move, they had few NVGs' also and fire was exchange; three soldiers of FF and one Tochi Scout Ghani Rehman Khattak were injured and when they were being evacuated in the vehicle of SSG the vehicle itself was ambushed injuring two SSG soldiers. On this the medical officer of Tochi Scouts Captain Saeed moved forward and evacuated all the casualties, eye witness accounts highlight the devotion and courage of Captain Saeed who was challenged in the dark by the miscreants but he replied that I would have treated you equally with same care had you been also injured, so let me go. FF now started returning the fire and under this fire the Tochi and SSG moved forward and started occupying the positions but surprise on which this operation hinged was now lost. Artillery fire was called in depth, but the whole night was spent on ground without any clear identification of enemy who was also wearing the regular army uniform. Furthermore the announcements were being made in the village mosques urging people to take up arms and tribesmen started pouring in from the adjoining villages taking up positions on the dominating heights south of target area.

117 Brigade

By morning it became obvious that the troops have been encircled and outnumbered at Khatti Killi, thus 117 Brigade was inducted in the operation, its one unit 19 FF was at Datta Khel and other 23 AK was located at MiranShah along with remaining 4 Commando Battalion.

At 1040 hours the very first sortie of Cobras came in and attacked the miscreants, By 1350 hours the brigade tactical headquarters and 23 AK were heli-lifted to Boya from where they marched westwards, brigade establishing the tactical headquarters at Pawani(3988 feet) and 23 AK attempting to establish a link up with the company of 27 FF. 4 Commando Battalion's company was also heli-dropped at a height of 3644 feet , it was accomplished by 1420 hours, however due to the miscreants accurate fire the intended drop zone was compromised, another company of 33 FF was dropped on the east of the village Khatti Killi,

helicopters flying through Berai Sar and Panekzai, this company was in position from 1500 hours onwards, four helicopters flying in two sorties accomplished the drop. Two companies of 19 FF also reached the area by 1600 hours. Thus an outer cordon was established.

33 FF Company Commander Major Muhammad Khan assessed the situation and decided to occupy the ridge lines where miscreants were already in position, he advanced along with his group and then communication was lost till 1845 hours²⁷⁶. On resumption of communication it was learnt that he is encircled and as such artillery fire was called in. Meanwhile another company of Tochi Scouts was moved from MiranShah towards the Khatti Killi adopting the southern route for link up with the 33 FF. Tochi Company arrived in the area in hours of darkness and tried to establish the contact, but to no avail. On the western side of the target 23 AK was able to secure the Pawani Ridge before the arrival of two companies of 19 FF that were heli-lifted from Datta Khel to Boya. By the end of first day 29th September there were ten soldiers missing and there was no contact with them, it was only in the morning at 0900 hours that three dead bodies including that of company commander was found in a nullah, all in all three died, three were wounded and four other went missing in this link up east of target area.

30th September

The main effort and aim was to secure the heights around the target area where miscreants were hiding and carrying out fire on the troops below, another aim was to link with the company of 33 FF and Tochi Scouts on the east of target. Early in the morning three PAF's A-5 aircraft flew over the target area for fifteen minutes (0745-0800 hours) along with the Cobra Helicopters. Use of PAF was more psychological than having any effect on the operation in terms of physical damage, the speed of the aircraft is quite high and target area was clustered with own and miscreants that it was difficult for any pilot to identify own troops. In the pre Independence era the British used the air force quite frequently for the reason that helicopters were not invented then, but now with the Cobras on inventory the use of aircraft had no useful effects.

23 AK and 4 Commando started moving eastward from the night positions amidst fire from the miscreants, they were able to clear the first ridge known as Wat Khawara(2666 feet) and later Ware Pal , both actually formed ravines and nullahs, it was done by noon, simultaneously the two spurs between Spelmazai Algad and Prambagal Algad were also secured, Sepoy Hassan Jan of 4 Commando was shot first in the leg by the miscreants and as he bent down he received another fatal shot. Two Companies of 19 FF which were at Boya started moving forward and rest of the battalion was heli lifted from Datta Khel to MiranShah. Brigade tactical headquarters also moved forward eastward thus having a better observation of the events taking place below. Meanwhile at 1600 hours the company of 19 FF which had earlier been heli-lifted to MiranShah was now dropped near the company of 33 FF which had lost its company commander. Tochi Scouts suffered three casualties when miscreants' fire caused injuries they included Lance Naik Lal Muhit Khattak, Haroon Khan Bangash and Qaiser Abbas Bangash, Tochi was trying to link up with the western force and

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117 Brigade Headquarters Post Operation Report, 12 October 2005.

simultaneously they were trying to locate the Taliban on the ridges. Lal Muhit was hit in the chest by a bullet as was busy in ascertaining the positions of Taliban, Haroon and Qaiser were hit simultaneously by a sniper, both were buddies.

Sarkho Ridge (2967 feet) was important in the context of the operation and as such it was secured by 1600 hours by 19 FF (less two companies) along with SSG.

1st October 2005

The area around the target was not utterly secured, there was sporadic fire coming down from the ridges and link up between the western and eastern forces was not completed yet, and with this aim the day started. PAF was called in for show of force and their A-5 aircraft flew low over the target area for 55 minutes (0735 – 0830). When the actual movement of troops started taking place the Cobra helicopters were in direct support along with artillery fire. 27 FF & 19 FF regiments (each less two companies) and Company Tochi Scouts manoeuvred and secured the Sarkho Top and Spurs south of Dipuri Village. Tochi Scouts led the force, the objectives were attained by 1225 hours.

On the other side at eastern end a search of the area was conducted by the company of 19 FF along with 33 FF & Tochi Scouts, later Bera Sar was secured at 1500 hours and link up with the 27 FF was achieved. The circle around the target was now completed and now the actual task of searching the madrassa and the compound had to be undertaken. On the third day the locals came out and pleaded for a cease fire which was agreed and search of Maulvi Sadiq Noor's house was carried out and operation culminated successfully. The search started at 1525 hours and within an hour it was completed 'few items including a small quantity of rounds of different calibres were recovered'.

2nd October 2005

At 1100 hours the Engineers demolition squad was heli lifted from the MiranShah and they carried out the demolition of the Sadiq Noor's house at 1540 hours. The force after the demolition of the house started extricating and reached back to MiranShah at 1915 hours under the cover of Cobra Helicopters.

Artillery fired 185 rounds of medium calibre in this operation against nine targets employing six observers. Fire support was provided by the batteries of 65 Medium, 86 Field, Tochi Field and Thall Scouts. Reportedly over 50 Taliban were killed in this operation and scores were injured including Sadiq Noor who unfortunately was able to escape through. The own casualties were four shaheeds (two from 33 FF, one from 44 Signals, One from 4 Commando)thirteen were injured(three each from 27 FF, Tochi Scouts & SSG, two each from 33 FF & 86 Field) there were three missing in action two from 33 FF and one from 86 Field.

Eye Witness Accounts

Brigadier Tahir Wafai is presently commanding an infantry brigade at MirAli, he was leading 27 FF, he recalls 'it was a dark night and I was leading the battalion, ahead of me were two Tochi Scouts, I had my battalion commander group with me, track was uneven, we had reached almost halfway, at 0215 hours all of a sudden fire came down on us from all direction, we immediately took positions and started returning the fire. Few of my troops

while taking cover had fallen into the trench which was almost six feet deep, after some time I ascertained the command and control. In darkness nothing much could be done, my major worry was about the situation that is likely to unfold with first ray of dawn. Miscreants were occupying the mountain on the right of my battalion, on the left River Tochi, we were squeezed in a tight belt of uneven ground. I whispered to my adjutant that I am going to shout orders, do not take any actions on it. I started abusing Taliban and shouted to my troops to take the mountain from the rear and do not leave any one alive, I will slaughter all these bastard Taliban myself. My rouse worked and fire stopped coming on us. But then dawn also came upon horizon. Later in the day we got the attack helicopters for our support but they were rather high and not much of use initially; later I gave one of the pilot my piece of mind and it worked. My first soldier got wounded in the first hours after dawn. Later we climbed up the ridge on our right and kept it under own control till the termination of operation. we started creeping forward, trying to reach the heights, in which we were successful by the end of first day'.

Naib Subedar Sharbat Khattak was then a havildar, he narrates ' We had a briefing about the mission which was to carry out a search and cordon of Khatti Killi, we reached Boya in our own transport and from there we started marching, ahead of us was the army, we were second and behind us was the SSG, at some time one of the civilian flashed a torch and inquired about us, I told him to switch off the torch, we move forward and all of a sudden fire came on us, we all hit the ground and started returning the fire. Enemy fire was not intense rather sporadic in nature, in the same very position we spent the night and when the Fajr Prayers call was given by the Khatti Killi mosque, followed by an announcement that army has come into the village and as such Jihad is now compulsory. In the morning the jets came but they were high and did not dived due to narrow valley, Cobras also came and they were a great morale booster, I came to know that Brigadier Ghayoor has also arrived. We also came to know that one major has been slaughtered along with another jawan and that one jawan has been left alive for the reason that he is a Pathan. Taliban had made deep trenches in the peaks and in the mountains like rat holes, from where they were firing, the SSG soldier who was killed and evacuated by his own platoon mate later told me that it was almost impossible to identify the Taliban for the reasons that they were also wearing the army uniform. These Taliban used to hide inside their mouse holes on hearing the helicopter noise. On the third morning it was announced that the peace committee is coming with a white flag and as such no fire should be opened on them, they later went into the house of Maulvi Sadiq Noor also. We were provided food from Boya and helicopters also dropped a little food but we sustained it. We had reached the house of Maulvi Sadiq Noor by the third evening and ourselves and SSG conducted the search, it was a pucca house, Sadiq Noor himself was not present, later we spent the night in the adjoining mountains. On the fourth morning at noon a Malak Kalu²⁷⁷ came and guided us through the eastern track through the Shina Khawara Pass, it is a narrow defile which was under the control of Taliban, it is green area with orchards, after crossing it we embossed and reached MiranShah. '

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Malak Kalu was later assassinated by Taliban.

Havildar Farman Bangash is presently performing the duties of commandant's escort, he was also part of Tochi Scouts which took part in the Khatti Killi operation, he recalls ' We were ready by evening for move to Khatti Killi and for reasons known better to superior officers we moved around mid-night and reached Boya Bridge, from where we started move close to first light, we were stopped enroute by a civilian who inquired about our mission and commandant had a discussion with them, and we move forward. Khatti Killi Village is situated between two ridges, there were guards on both the edges, one of them fired a rocket on us and they had also made bunkers there. One SSG soldier was injured who was evacuated by our doctor Captain Saeed, while he was taking him and others back towards Boya, he was fired upon near Raghazai and few men probably Talibans stopped him and he said to them that he is a doctor and as such it is his duty to care for people and he would have done the same for them also, he was allowed to proceed. I saw four Taliban being hit with Cobra fire, one hit the ground and other came to rescue him and he was also hit'.

Brigadier Sardar Sajjad was a lieutenant colonel during the operation and in command of the 9 Army Aviation Squadron, he narrates that 'on 1st October 2005, I had brought the Corps Commander Lieutenant General Safdar to the MiranShah, we had landed at the brigade tactical headquarters at around 0830 hours, from where we flew to the MiranShah , corps commander attended a meeting, while I was at the helipad I received a message regarding the evacuation of a casualty from the Khatti Killi, as I was warming up the Lama, the corps commander also arrived, I explained to him the situation and thus he waited at the helipad and I flew to the Khatti Killi, after landing there I saw a body of troops who had plastered dry lips and wrinkled faces, they were waving their empty water bottles. I gave them all the water I had, placed the injured soldier in the helicopter and promised them that I am coming back with water. I gave call to Air Traffic Controller at MiranShah to get hold of all the water bottles and water coolers, hats off to the Tochi Scouts that as I landed they were ready with water which I immediately took back to the Khatti Killi, I made another trip before I ran out of fuel and Tochi out of water bottles'.

Naib Subedar Riaz Wazir is presently serving in No.5 Wing at Boya, he also took part in the operation and regarding the water issue his observation is quite interesting that ' we all ran out of water, the villagers majority of whom had left on the very first day of operation, we stopped firing while women and children were leaving the village, later when the water shortage started occurring then villagers gave us the water, but they were reluctant to give water to army jawans, thus we shared our water with them' .

Captain Doctor Saeed Akhtar Khattak was commissioned in 2003 and reported to Tochi Scouts as Regimental Medical Officer (RMO) on 23rd September 2004, he was posted as RMO of No.5 Wing at Boya on 26th July 2005. His conduct during the operation was applauded by all, he upheld the values of medical profession and Army Medical Corps. Risking his life beyond the call of duty, he after God Almighty saved the lives of five soldiers. His name was mentioned in despatches.²⁷⁸

Operation Datta Khel 1-3 October 2005

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Tochi Scouts Letter No.5313/7/A 9th October 2005.

Operation at Khatti Killi had a chain reaction across the NWA; the most affected areas' were the Datta Khel and MiranShah. On the night of the operation 29th September no less than nine rockets were fired at the MiranShah Fort, two at Jallar Post at MirAli and on 30th September the road blocks were established by the miscreants at in MirAli, Degan, Qutab Khel and Khar Kamar (all Daur territories). MiranShah again came under attack on the next night and so were Idak and MirAli where eight rockets were fired upon which later resulted in the shahadat of two NCO's and other five were injured at STA including Lance Naik Zain Ullah Wazir.

A simultaneous operation was envisaged at Datta Khel where Ajab Khan, Pashakai and Mushtaq Khan's houses were to be searched and they all were to be apprehended; preferably alive. They were all notorious arms smugglers although they were not rated in the same breath as Sadiq Noor was in terms of giving safe heavens to the miscreants but they were suspected of having soft corner for them. One company of Tochi Scouts, two companies of 5 AK Regiment and available artillery were the force available and task to carry out this operation. Anyone having read the history of the area would have cast doubts about the success of such venture with the composition of force for this operation.

There had been rows of incident in Datta Khel where on regular basis army and locals had narrow and minor clashes, for instance in one incident on 13th September 2005 a vehicle of 5 NLI was stopped at Dwa Toi resultantly firing was exchanged in Maizer Village. On 17th in another incident No.3 Wing and 5 NLI troops signalled a car to stop but it did not complied with instructions and fire was open on it. On 21st September 2005 a Jirga was held at MiranShah in which malaks of Madda Khel and political agent attended, the end result was a deadlock. On the next day another search operation was conducted by the army in Datta Khel. The elders and malaks pointed out that where as they are ready to cooperate but lady searchers must be there for search of the houses. The problem was that no lady searchers were available at the tehsil or village level and had to be transported from MiranShah. On 28th Another Jirga was held at Datta Khel Bazar in which Commanding officers of 19 FF, 5 NLI and Wing Commander Major Tariq of Tochi Scouts participated, later searches of the 16 shops was carried out, it lasted for an hour without finding anything objectionable.

Compounds of all three were situated on the southern bank of the track leading from Datta Khel Post towards Idar Khel, almost a mile to the south of Chashmai, on the numerous fringes of Wucha Shaga Algad. Ajab Khan's compound comes first, then a kilometre on the west comes Pashakai's compound and finally the Mushtaq Khan's compound is the last one a further mile away, but it is almost inside the Dande Killi and north of the track, east of Idar Khel. The first compound was to be searched on 1st October and other two were on 2nd October 2005. In the initial planning all three were to be done simultaneously but later realising the gravity of situation and with the moving of force towards the Khatti Killi the plan was made flexible.

The best part of the operation was that it did not had to meet the same resistance as experienced at Khatti Killi, but nothing significance was gained from the searches. It was the diplomatic power of Tochi Scouts which paved the way for the searches. It must be remembered that only few years ago Tochi Scouts were able to gain foothold in the area.

Tochi Scouts had to establish the inner cordons and army was given the responsibility of putting the outer cordons.

In the debrief the points almost were the same as in the Khatti Killi, lack of intelligence and update information about the target, insufficient troops, communication problem and above all the lack of co-ordination with aviation, who raised points about the insecure heli landing sites.

This operation later resulted in the physical attack on Zara Mela Post in which one miscreant was killed and other five were injured. Another attack was launched against the Datta Khel when on the night of 5/6th October three rockets were fired, in retaliation own troop's fire killed three civilians and one was injured. Next night Isha Post came under attack but it was repulsed and on the morning of 9th October an IED was exploded on MiranShah – Boya road in which one army jawan embraced shahadat. NLI Camp came under attack on 6th October too, 12 Sind Regiment was attacked near Ghulam Khan, all these check posts were jointly manned by the Tochi Scouts along with army. Tochi Scouts expended 220 rounds of G-3 at Ghulam Khan and 390 rounds at Datta Khel.

Zara Mela

On 2/3 October 2005, miscreants attack Zara Mela Check Post at 0215 hours in strength, there were at about 60 odd miscreants. The post not only absorb the attack but also retaliated in fury, reportedly six miscreants were killed, and one dead body was found in the morning. Havildar Inayat Khan Orakzai was the post commander, an inspiring commander; he not only held his own nerves but inspired others as well. Sepoy Zia Ur Rehman Orakzai was the sentry who first detected the movement in the darkness, he very correctly alerted all and fired the opening round. Sepoy Usman Khan Afridi played a key role in the defence of the post. He was manning the signals equipment. The batteries of the set became weak. Usman very intelligently conserved them by operating the set in an economical manner. A stage came when the set was almost dying, Usman switched off the set, opening again after pause of few minutes to get the instructions from the Wing Headquarters and also to pass back required data. In the end miscreants were forced to leave the area with their weapons left behind which included few magazines of SMG, odd round of RPG-7, one intercommunication set and three grenades. This does not look much but notion of victory was achieved by the Tochi Scouts.

Names of Naiks Muhammad Khan Khattak, Haroon Rashid Afridi, Lance Naik Khaista Khan Orakzai, Sepoys Amanullah Orakzai, Aminullah Khattak, Sabir Ullah Wazir and Abdul Waheed Wazir were mentioned in despatches for the valiant defence of the post²⁷⁹.

Isha Check Post

Tochi Scouts had the duty of checking all the vehicles at Isha Check Post. There have been certain observations regarding this checking of vehicles as it caused inconvenience to the civilians but following instance highlight how important this checking was and still is. It

²⁷⁹ Tochi Scouts Letter 5313/7/A/20 dated 6th October 2005.

was 0900 hours on the morning of 2nd October 2005, the Bannu bound flying coach from MiranShah was stopped at Isha. Lance Naik Abbass Gul Khattak climb up to have a look at the passengers, he suspected two among the fourteen passengers sitting and ordered them to get down. Both initially hesitated but then made moves as if getting down. The moment they reached the door of the flying coach they took out pistols and fired on Abbass, who was lucky to survive the hits. In next moment he turned around and grab one of the assailant, dragging him down.

Two more miscreants in meanwhile opened fire on the scouts present on ground through the open windows of the van. Naib Subedar Saleem Yusafzai retaliated and fired on the tyres of the van. Sepoy Mohabat Ali Bangash ran forward and took position in front of the running van forcing the driver to halt. Two miscreants jumped out and started running towards the vegetated area but were shot down by the accurate fire of Naik Rajb Ali Turi and Lance Naik Lal Ibrahim Orakzai, two other were arrested. Four grenades, two SMG, two automatic pistols and eight magazines were confiscated from the miscreants.

Chashmai Bridge 10th October 2005

10th October was Monday and No. 4 Wing's vehicle was going towards Boya when it reached the outskirts of the city and was about to climb onto the bridge a loud bang was heard and the vehicle toppled, an IED had been exploded at the home edge of the bridge, the other two vehicles following it, immediately halted and scouts took position. A motorcycle with two riders tried to speed away but one received fatal shots and other survived and captured, later given medical treatment as well. Five scouts of Tochi were seriously injured included Naik Bakhri Zaman Yusafzai, Lance Naik Kabir HussainOrakzai, Sepoys Shahid Hussain Yusafzai, Khial Hussain Turi & Siraj Ul Islam Afridi; all of them later recovered with passage of time and were back on the front. The confiscated motorcycle was handed over to the next of kin's on 22nd October.

Throughout the month of October the law enforcing agencies were under attack but these attacks were not of organised nature rather odd rocket fired at the posts, IED blast, or simply firing on the vehicles moving. Reply from the army and Scouts was spirited. On 14th October another scout of Tochi Naik Basir Khan Wazir was hit when a rocket landed at Khajauri at 2330 hours, a burst of fire followed from the western side (college side) which was returned by the Tochi. A day earlier at 1330 hours three missiles were fired upon the MirAli camp without causing any damage. Kunar Sar Post a joint post manned by Tochi & 13th Punjab Regiment also came under attack on 13th October at 1020 hours in which one soldier of 13th Punjab Havildar Muhammad Aziz embraced shahadat. On 17th October Tochi Scouts disarmed four bombs of 82 mm Mortar which were remote controlled and packed in a crate, these were handed over to 206 Survey Group. The Pioneer Sections of Tochi Scouts again carried out a commendable action when a shopping bag which had the explosives was placed near Honeymoon Hotel on MirAli – Bannu Road and was identified by the Thall Scouts on road protection duty, the pioneers had to rush from the MiranShah to carry out the task.

On the morning of 31st October, working on an intelligence tip Tochi Scouts not only found but also disarmed four hand grenades and two anti-tank mines at 1410 hours before

handing them over to the division. Amidst all this an unfortunate incident took place at Kalanjar II Post where at 2300 hours Sepoy Irshad Ahmed Afridi fired eight rounds on his superior Havildar Ashraf Bangash, out of which four shots hit him on the feet, the firer was overpowered by the other scouts on the post, later Chigha platoon had to be despatched from MiranShah to bring back the culprit and the injured.

Eid Ul Fitr

Eid was celebrated on 5th November 2005 with usual prayers and routine. The malaks of the city came to greet the commandant from 0920 – 1300 hours, later IGFC Major General Tariq came to greet the troops from Peshawar and met the troops. On Eid usually the commandant visit as many posts as possible with Eid gifts and sweets, but it was not possible on this Eid.

On 12th December 2005, Colonel Yousaf Iqbal took over the command of Tochi Scouts.

Gangs Banged- MiranShah

North Waziristan Agency had always been a breeding place for gangsters and despite regular operations by the different law enforcing agencies they have been able to flourish in their trade, the last gang warfare in the agency took place in December 2005. Jabari and Hakim Khan about whom last was mentioned in 2004, they had managed to escape the arrests then but in December were caught between the devil and the sea. Both these gangs had a notorious history and rivalry that dates back to almost three decades during which they had committed all kind of crimes. In October 2004 Tochi Scouts carried out an operation against both these gangs, majority of their houses were demolished on 9th October 2004, and positions around their compounds were occupied by the Tochi Scouts in December 2004, two scouts Sepoy Asif Bangash and Sepoy Abdullah Marwat had received fatal injuries during that operation, Jabari had surrendered unconditionally on 15th December and Hakim Khan on 16th December 2004, both were placed inside the Tochi Scouts quarter guard and later shifted to the Dera Ismail Khan Jail, in their absence gangs were led by Sher Ali and Jahangir Khan respectively.

The last act of this gang warfare was played in December 2005, which by itself shows the situation prevailing in the agency. The troubled started when in end November 2005 Hakim Khan's gang forcibly took the money from the public transport near Boya, the passengers mostly women were related to Maulana Sadiq Noor. The Taliban threatened the groups but to no avail, on 6th December 2005 the gang again stopped five vehicles carrying goods for 'Bhatta', the goods belonged to Sadiq Noor. Taliban resisted on which Sher Ali who himself was leading this act opened fire on them and killed five Taliban on the spot, in the return he also received a fatal bullet which ended his life too; this duel lasted for half an hour.

By 1650 hours Taliban concentrated and surrounded the houses of Sher Ali and Hakim Khan and fired the first of the rocket on them at 1705 hours, within half an hour both houses were demolished, heavy weapons including rockets & missiles were used. These Taliban were not satisfied with this and they hunted the group members of the gangs and by the end of the night had killed 11 members of Hakim Khan Group alone. Next day after the

Fajr prayers the Taliban continued with their manhunt and killed further seven members of the group. The houses and property of these members were also burnt, demolished and destroyed but womenfolk were not harmed. The dead bodies were displayed in open hanging from the electric polls and trees in Dande Darpa Khel. In next move these Taliban cordoned the house of Mir Kalam Khan and inflicted the same fate on him too. The gangsters in retaliation fired three rockets on MiranShah Fort at 1215 hours without causing any damage. It must be noted that both these gangs had bitter feelings towards the Tochi Scouts on the basis of Dande Land issue which they claimed belongs to them and in the past used to send the threats to the scouts.

Another interesting and strange phenomenon that took place was the announcement by the Taliban from the mosques that anyone who will cause any damage or harm to the Tochi Scouts or the army will meet the same fate²⁸⁰.

On 8th December the hunt for the gangsters was resumed by the Taliban and by the end of the day a total of twenty gang members were killed and their bodies displayed on road MiranShah – Datta Khel. Taliban handed over five dead bodies to Darpa Khel tribe for burial, thirteen to political agent for burial and two they kept hanging on the road. Political agent had a meeting with the GOC 7 Division on the issue. Company of Tochi Scouts was kept alert for any eventuality. On 9th December the gangs were completely eliminated, a Jirga was convened by the political agent and things started returning to normalcy.

It is a sad commentary on the overall act because with this action the Taliban established them as an alternate organ, a state within the state, they achieved within a span of three days something which all the elements of the state were denying them. It seriously altered the very mind set of a common person. The same very group who had almost two months back had inflicted casualties on the military at Khatti Killi was now in action and they were not taken to the task by the military, it was a golden opportunity to crush them.

The positive aspect was the good will by the Taliban towards the law enforcing agencies; they created an impact among all that the fight is not between these rather with those who are not part of the agency. It needs clarification, because there were different groups of Taliban working, living, operating in the agency and as such there was no single person controlling all these, thus from the state point of view it was important to have as many friends as possible among them. After all these were Muslims, Pakistanis and as such no deep enmity existed, however the very people responsible for attacks on the military, for killing and kidnapping of troops, for attacks on posts and convoys had to be brought to the justice and this is where the paths of state and Taliban separates.

Army Aviation

In both operations (Khatti Killi & Datta Khel) the lack of coordination with Army Aviation was highlighted. Both should have been Army Aviation operations; ideally suited for a heliborne insertion. Comments of Tochi Scouts, 117 Brigade and 7 Infantry Division all highlights the lack of communication among the ground and helicopters. The division

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Commandant Tochi Scouts briefing to IGFC on 12 December 2005.

highlighted that the SSG Company was dropped before the drop zone and 33 FF Company ahead of the drop zone. This was the first major operation of Army Aviation in NWA involving ground troops²⁸¹ and it played a decisive part in both the attack and logistics part of it. There were and still are certain fundamental misconceptions about Army Aviation employment in the operations. Army Aviation from 2001 onwards underwent drastic changes in which new helicopters were inducted as part of efforts against the terror, special operation task force (SOTF) was raised in which aviators and SSG operated together; yet aviation did not have integral fighting troops. All the troops in aviation are on extra regimental employment from artillery and as such are not employed in operations. The need was and still is to have integral fighting troops as part of aviation squadron, which can be inserted into the battlefield as in Khatti Killi, who are capable of holding, advancing and fighting at their own. The insertion of troops from infantry, FC or from SSG who have very little experience of the helicopters is not a good omen. This was the primary cause of the delayed response from heli-inserted troops and in case of 33 FF it proved fatal. Cobra pilots at no stage were inducted in the planning phase and neither any of the cargo or utility pilot was taken into confidence. 33 FF Company had never been inside any of the helicopters lest to talk about the practice of jumping or orientation of ground. In case of Datta Khel Operation had the troops been part of aviation squadron then the issue of landing sites would have never arisen and moreover all three compounds would have been searched in a single day rather simultaneously.

Aviation squadrons are of multiple kinds, attack squadrons which are equipped only with Cobras, utility or cargo have Mi-17, Puma or Bell 412 Helicopters. These squadrons are part of aviation bases. Within a corps an aviation squadron has one odd Lama Helicopter and dozen fixed wing single engine MFI-17 aircraft. These pilots less the corps squadron never directly came under the command channel of field formation and as such the issue of communication remained a sore point. Moreover during operations the variety of helicopters (Cobra/Mi-17/ Puma) was all from different squadrons and had the inherent technical limitations of endurance, radius, firepower and above all ego.

In Taliban's captivity

Many scouts were kidnapped by the Taliban while they were coming back from leave to their posts, these scouts were part of Tochi Scouts and also from Swat and Thall Scouts which were under command Tochi Scouts. The normal procedure was that these scouts used to travel by public transport running from almost all parts of NWA to Bannu onwards to Peshawar. Few were kidnapped during operations (Khatti Killi), their accounts of captivity shed light on the Taliban culture and the prevailing environments in the agency. Nursing Sepoy Samiullah Mohmand of Tochi Scouts had proceeded on leave from Mangaseen Post he was coming back when between Degan – Khar Kamar the public transport he was travelling in was stopped and from among the passengers he was off loaded by the Taliban, these Taliban at the same very time and spot also got Havildar Gul Muhammad of Swat Scouts who was proceeding on leave along with six other scouts. All

²⁸¹ History of Pakistan Army Aviation, p - 369

these scouts were blind folded and taken into another car and driven to another place ‘ we were driven for about two hours on a dirt track, then we were forced to march for some time and pushed into a room where our blinds were removed, it was a deserted mosque with mountains all around. They asked us whether we belong to militia or army, they assured us that they will set us free after couple of days, there were eight sentries posted on us, we slept on mats, they would allow us to go a little bit away to attend call of nature. Food was good and seemed to be home cooked but it was meagre. Whole day we were confined to the one room, our hands were bounded ‘Recalls Havildar Gull, Samiullah has similar memories. Sepoy Lazmat Khan of MS was abducted along with two other scouts of same corps while going back to Razmak near Qutab Khel. They were also blindfolded and taken away in a double cabin transport. ‘We had no idea about the massive earthquake which had hit the country but one of the Taliban sentry had a newspaper and told us about it, we were warned not to run or we will be shot, they were not rough neither we were tortured, they asked us about our job and inquired whether we belong to army or militia. On hearing that we belong to militia, they said that had we been part of army then they would have done something different to us, these Taliban were against the Punjabis. Food for us was brought on a car, all these Taliban always covered their faces, they used to call each other as Emir or Hafiz, and they were carrying rocket launchers as well. They used to recite that we should be grateful that we are part of militia and not army. We all used to pray regularly and together, they did not took our personal belongings and returned them to us when they dropped us in the same manner in which we were abducted’ narrates Lazmat Khan. Sepoy Israr of 5 Wing Tochi Scouts was also abducted on 29th September 2005 near Degan and had the same narration ‘when these Taliban dropped us near Tablighi Markaz MiranShah, they all embraced us before departing’.

The routine during Ramadan during captivity was not much different from earlier days but proper sehri and iftar was arranged, including chicken and Pepsi. All the kidnapped scouts were released by mid October 2005.

Saidgai Search & Cordon Operation 5th January 2006

The year started with the operation in the Saidgai area, aim was to search the three compounds belonging to Hafiz Noor Muhammad, Dareem Khan and Shammati. In an related event a large gathering{300/350} at Naurak was addressed by the Maulana Sadiq Noor in which Sadiq stressed that Hafiz Gul Bahadur is the commander-in- chief of all the Taliban forces and no action should be taken without his consultation, the actions across the borders will be continued, the strict vigilance against the drugs, immorality, theft, dacoits and lawlessness in the agency will remained enforce, last but not the least was the decision that all sacrificial hides in the agency should be collected and deposited in Bait ul Maal. Another gathering was held at Idak where similar announcements were made, it was also highlighted that from now there will be one person in each village who will keep an eye on the people who are working or reporting to the military. Coming back to the Saidgai, the operation was

conducted independently by the Tochi Scouts and is a classic example of how these kinds of operations should be carried out.

Saidgai is situated at an elevation of 4235 feet having a population of 5000-7000 scattered in mud houses. Area is surrounded by dominating heights all around, Faqiran, Dande, Dewgar and Saidgai are the important villages in this complex, Saidgai Wazir are the dominating clan. On 4th January 2006 Tochi Scouts received the orders from the 7 Division for a search operation to be carried out by last light 7th January; initial intelligence highlighted the presence of foreigners in the area. This was the first operation under the new commandant Colonel Yusuf Iqbal and he made sure that all the battle procedures are followed. He had a wing strength force with a company of 177 Brigade as reserve, the helicopters were on call, and one medium artillery battery of Thall Scouts was in direct support.

Operation envisaged a simultaneous cordon of the surrounding area and then search of the houses with the help of lady searchers and political administration including the Khassadars.

Conduct of Operation

Commandant along with Lieutenant Colonel Bilal Asghar the No.1 Wing Commander, Captains Waseem, Afzal and Wajid moved to the Saidgai Check Post for a detailed reconnaissance and formulated the plan. It was decided to have two blocking positions one on the north west and other on the south east of the target area; they also decided to occupy the surrounding heights. On the same day one company under the command of Captain Waseem moved from MiranShah and concentrated at Saidgai.

Establishing Cordon

Dardoni II was the rendezvous {RV} for all the forces, Wing Commander Lieutenant Colonel Bilal moved with his company from Ghulam Khan and reached there at 0500 hours on 5th January minutes later Captain Wajid also arrived from MiranShah with his company followed by the Commandant. On getting the signal Captain Waseem along with his troops moved stealthily from Saidgai and before anyone could notice he had established the road block on the northwest of the target area, simultaneously he moved a platoon towards the southeast of the intended target, he established his company headquarters on the northern edge of the compounds, all his troops were in place by 0715 hours.

Occupation of southern side of the target area was the responsibility of the Captain Wajid, who also moved out from Dardoni II with his company on motors and debussed at Dardoni III, from where he lead his troops , he established a road block, thus cutting off the target area completely. He was in position by 0730 hours.

Lieutenant Colonel Bilal had a company with him, which he led to the northern and north eastern ridges around the target area. Here the fog of war started when he was challenged by the tribesmen who were already on the ridges, Bilal very wisely avoided the confrontation and readjusted his positions.

Lieutenant Colonel Bilal along with the Assistant Political Officer Iqbal Khattak in the company of khassadars and two lady searchers now embarked on the most difficult part of the operation to convince the elders of the villages to allow the search of the compounds, they finally managed to get through the arguments and searched started at 0945, it was over by 1145 hours. Nothing was found.

At 1245 hours the signal from the division was received to fall back, one vehicle was stopped at the road blocks and three persons were apprehended but they were later released. The complete force arrived back at MiranShah at 1320 hours.

Conclusion

Nothing was found but more importantly no loss of human lives took place, force was not encircled neither ambushed which has been a pattern of Frontier Warfare. This operation highlights the intricacies of the tribal life pattern and the way of dealing them. You cannot enter a house without permission, no male can search the ladies portion of a house, it requires lady searchers, when all this is followed in letter and spirit then **surprise is lost**. The houses of natives are not ordinary in pattern or construction, they are compounds, the tunnels are dug for escape routes, thus it is possible for any miscreant or wanted person to make good of escape. The other option is to just storm a house which army initially adopted in early days of the operations with far reaching consequences. Thus a search and cordon operation in the agency under the prevailing circumstances was a no win situation.

Hassu Khel

On the night of 6/7 January 2006, Tochi Scouts had the worst of everything, it suffered catastrophic casualties, its reputation was marred and for the first time since 1971 it had to face so many casualties in a single day in a single attack. The war was now on its door step. Tochi Scouts had taken parts in the actions as part of Operation Al Mizan, yet the mind set was still reeling in the state where it was felt that nothing serious will happen but this attack brought a stark reality to everyone that this is not just army's operation it is every one's war and it has to be won.

The tribes in the area around MirAli includes Daur, Haider Khel, Mausaki, Hassu Khel, Hurmaz, Zerraki, Khaddi, Tori Khel and Maddi Khel. Major villages are Mausaki & Hurmaz Killi in South West, Ipi on South East, these are situated in close proximity of MirAli whereas Hassu Khel, Natasi and Khushali all in the south are almost 6-10 Kilometres away. Hassu Khel is on the northern bank of Tochi River where as Natasi is on southern bank and Khushali is again on the southern bank but slightly away.

NATASI CHECK POST

Warning orders for establishment of a post on the Tochi River came on 31st August 2005. Resultantly Natasi Check Post was established on 2nd September 2005 on the orders of 7 Division, its primary aim was to keep an eye on the movement across the river. Initial strength was 25 scouts. There was already a khassadar post at Natasi almost 850 meters south of Tochi River thus it was merely reinforced. Establishment of a post in North Waziristan Agency is not like establishing a post on Mall Road of Peshawar or Lahore; rather it involves a political process, it is always assessed in a historical perspective and in the end no post can

be established without the consent of a jirga. From 1900 onwards this system has been challenged time and again by the army with serious consequences and this time again it was no exception. Natasi Post was surrounded by the locals who demanded its removal as it violates their Riway. Jirga of Hassu Khel presented an application to the assistant political agent urging and requesting the removal of Scouts from the Natasi post. Tochi Scouts and political administration had a difficult time in making the division understand the consequences; they partially succeeded and Tochi Scouts were taken away from the Natasi Post from 25th October 2005. The No.2 Wing of Tochi Scouts was placed under command sub sector MirAli of Army from 8th October 2005 onwards.

HASSU KHEL CHECK POST

Most delicate part in Frontier Warfare is the issue of face saving & ego, whenever these two abstract values override historical evidence then disaster is almost knocking on door. It was decided to have the post in the same area but instead of having it on southern end as part of khassadar post, a new post was established on 25th December 2005 on the northern bank of Tochi River to be known as Hassu Khel Check Post. Tochi Scouts rightly demanded defence stores from the division but it was left to the political administration to do so; which they did but it was forcibly taken away by the locals on 29th December 2005.

The post was established under canvas on 31st December 2005 with 35 scouts, one officer, two JCOs and 32 scouts {one havildar, one naik, 10 lance naiks, 15 soldiers and five NCEs}. This post had the first warning of impending attack when on 3rd January 2006 at 2330 hours miscreants fired two rockets coupled with small arms fire, the scouts on duty responded back and attack was repulsed. After an hour the post was again attacked with similar results. Post had no bunkers at that time it was living under the tents.

Post had established a barrier on the main road just adjacent to the bridge, it had four main machine gun mud bunkers. Two bunkers were at a distance of 500 meters away from the bridge on the northern direction {towards MirAli} two were on the bridge itself {one was on the road and other at the base of bridge}, mortars were placed in the centre. The bias of post was towards the south east, all living and ammunition tents were pitched on the eastern side adjacent to the bridge relatively at a lower height. Lone armoured personnel carrier was also parked here. It had six machine guns with 18500 rounds, one RPG-7 with 17 rockets, two mortars with 48 bombs and 36 hand grenades apart from APC as major weapons. Post had the built up area on its west {Hassu Khel Village} on the east village of Mullagon with Tochi River flowing on the south, the road MirAli – Jallar bisects it in centre. There were open patches of field between the post and built up areas.

6/7 JANUARY 2006

On the night of 6/7 January 2006 at 0115 hours suspicious movement was spotted by the machine gun bunker sentry from the northwest direction {Hassu Khel}, simultaneously miscreants moved in from the northeast {Mullagon}. Both sentries fired warning shots, on hearing the shots the whole complex got into stand-to position {battle ready}. This position lasted for half an hour. It should be kept in mind that these two bunkers were almost five hundred meters away from the living bunkers and there was no communication with them.

There was suspense at the post, all were awake and occupied their battle positions, firing cautiously on any movement. Half an hour later the command echelon decided that there is no imminent threat thus apart from the regular sentries all other went back into their tents.

Ten minutes later another burst of fire awoke all and they rushed outside, occupied their battle positions. Heavy fire was coming from north and south of post with small arms being fired from other two directions. Post also replied with full firepower, this lasted for almost ten minutes and then again silence. Artillery fire was called by the post through the No.2 Wing at 0132 hours and within twenty minutes communication was lost with the post. Artillery responded blindly at 0215 hours but by that time it was all over. Captain Yahya, Subedar Zewar Khattak & Naib Subedar Sahib Wazir kept the morale of post high by moving from one position to the other, encouraging under commands, firing at the suspected positions.

Captain Yahya Mohmand of 58 Medium Air Defence Regiment was the post commander, he was an attached officer. Subedar Zewar Khattak and Naib Subedar Sahib Rehman Wazir were both seasoned scouts; they decided to have a patrolling of the area to ascertain the facts and above all to raise the morale of the post, thus apart from these three, Lance Naiks Tahir Iqbal Khattak & Mukhtar Ullah Orakzai, Sepoys Mukhtar Ali Turi, Khurshid Iqbal Khattak and Mehboob Ur Rehman Khattak formed a fighting patrol. They moved in an anti-clockwise direction, almost between the outer living tent and the machine gun bunker they came across miscreants who in dark shouted and warned them to surrender. Captain Yahya moved forward with an aim to engage the miscreant in conversation and replied in negative to their earlier offer; he was shot dead receiving a full burst of machine gun. On watching this the patrol also not only refused to surrender but rather attack the miscreants who were hiding in darkness. Fighting Patrol charged but they all embraced shahadat.

Sepoy Mehboob Ur Rehman Khattak was the first one to go down when a rocket hit him in the head, *‘Sepoy Mehboob Ur Rehman Khattak, took position in the bunker and retaliated with MG1A3. Due to the heavy fire sprayed by the machine gun of Number 202693 Sepoy Mehboob Ur Rehman Khattak, the miscreants dared not to take a step forward. Seeing the valour and exemplary marksmanship of the individual, frustrated miscreants fired RPG-7 rounds on the bunker. When his bunker collapsed, this brave and gallant son of Frontier Corps kept fighting from the damaged bunker till he was shot with burst of bullets and embraced Shahadat’*²⁸²

Sepoy Khurshid Iqbal was hit with a machine gun burst, Lance Naik Mukhtar Hussain Turi and his name sake Mukhtar Orakzai both died fighting with miscreants. *‘Sepoy Mukhtar Ali Turi, was on duty in his bunker. He effectively engaged the miscreants with his light machine gun by bringing accurate fire and kept the miscreants away from the post during fighting one of the miscreants engaged his bunker with RPG-7. Due to which Number 203688*

²⁸² Citation by Tochi Scouts. 15 January 2006.

*Sep Mukhtar Ali Turi, got badly injured but he kept on firing on the miscreants and kept them away. Due to heavy blood loss he embraced Shahadat*²⁸³

Subedar Zewar Wazir was a brave man, miscreants shouted to him offering him the amnesty; he replied back with an abuse followed by a burst of his machine gun, he was the last man to die. Sepoy Razif Afridi and Sepoy Sabir Ullah Wazir both managed to escape from this inferno.

Miscreants who reportedly numbered over 300 were able to take away three sub machine guns, 15 Rifles G-3, five MG1A3, one RPG-7, two 60mm Mortars and 48 grenades apart from sizeable quantity of ammunition which included 6000 rounds of G-3, 1450 rounds of SMG, 1200 rounds of LMG, 17 rockets of RPG-7 and 54 bombs of 60mm Mortar. Not only this they also made good of the ration at the post taking away 84 kilograms of dry milk, two kilogram of tea, 70 Kilograms of sugar and four tins of ghee. The sole armoured personnel carrier was also burnt.

After the incident the strength at the post was increased to 140, out of which 82 were from army and 58 from Tochi Scouts {No.2 Wing} commanded by a captain. It had six LMG's, one 14.5 mm gun, two RPG-7 and two 60mm Mortars apart from night vision devices.

Eye Witness account

Sepoy Razif Afridi is from Tirah {Khyber Agency} he joined Tochi Scouts in 2003, had six months training at MirAli before he was employed on operational duties. He recalls that in 2003-2004 there was freedom of going to the MiranShah City and none knew anything called Taliban in the city. Remembering that eventful day, he narrates *'I was in the No.2 Wing at MirAli, on that day 6th January 2006, I was told to proceed to the Hassu Khel Check Post which was a mile away from the MirAli Bazaar. It was pay day in a sense that vehicle taking the pay of post was proceeding. I was informed by the acting wing commander Captain Qayyum that I will be helping in the construction of the post and as such I do not require to carry my weapon with me. I thus arrived at the post with a heavy hammer.*

The post was in the shape of three or four tents and few bivouacs, it was on a lower ground, the road passing next to it is on a higher level, the tent complex was on the northern side {towards the MirAli}, there were two check points on the road, one was hundred meters away from the bridge other next to the bridge, I had to help in the construction of two rooms for the sentries on the road check points. Subedar Zewar briefed me and assured that I will not be performing any other duty on the post except construction of the rooms. I soon changed into my civvies and worked till evening, two other persons of Tochi Scouts also worked with me Mistri Juma Khan and Sepoy Rasheed, and they both have been working there for last one week.

*There was no security on the post, locals were coming and going, stopping and chatting, inquiring about the aim of construction of post and in the end giving advice to vacate the area. The whole tent complex was in an open field with only one **reinstating wall***

²⁸³ Ibid.

on the southern side separates it from the Tochi River. We all had our food in the open, the cook cooked food and chapattis on a big 'tawa' since it was cold thus it was heartening to sit around the fire. I soon left and went into my tent where apart from me there were another dozen of scouts, I slept on the floor with quilt wrapped around me.

Around midnight there was a general alarm and stand-to was observed. I just stood outside my tent wearing the shoes under my shalwar kameez with a chaddar wrapped around me. I had no duty; I just stood there idle watching the proceedings. The sentry had observed some movement coming from the southern side towards the camp, he was wearing night vision device. He had alerted the camp, subedar and Captain Yahya stood with him when a short burst of fire was made by the Taliban, in return post fire back with all weapons for fifteen minutes before the subedar intervened and highlighted the ammunition state, post stopped firing. I went back to my tent and soon others also followed. We were still standing outside the tent when all of a sudden a man from outside the post shouted that you all have been surrounded by over 1000 mujahedeen thus you should surrender. Captain Yahya was not fluent in Pashtu language thus Subedar replied back that we do not want any trouble and in the morning the post will be removed therefore you all should go back. The man replied that you should come forward for negotiations and on this the Captain Yahya and Subedar moved forward and then all of sudden we all were hit with rockets and machine gun fire. I at once hit the ground and crawl to my tent; I could see the other tent on fire. After some time I crawl back to the open and saw Taliban standing with his face wrapped holding a gun, there was chaos on the post with men running around, shells bursting, and tents on fire. I crawled away from the scene and jumped over the wall without giving any thought to what is on the other side, I landed on stones. I just remained idle and move few feet deep into a dug hole. The Taliban were carrying out the loot, talking at times in Arabic at times in Pashtu; they were wearing our helmets too.

Now own artillery shells started landing in nearby vicinity, I crawled under the bridge to keep myself safe from the splinters. I could see the Taliban walking on the bridge at times flashing their torches. I remained in this state for another two hours. I then crawled a mile and then almost ran towards the Khajauri which was almost three miles away. I reached at Khajauri at Fajr time, other scouts from the post have been pouring in all night thus sentry knew that I am also one of them. Later a court of inquiry was held, all of us were given punishments, sepoy were given 28 days rigorous imprisonment, and all others were demoted. I took the plea that I was never given the rifle in the first instance, but to no avail'.

Razif might have forgotten certain facts or the events but by and large this is what happened at Hassu Khel, where deviations from standard operating procedures {SOP}, taking the whole episode and events lightly and above all delayed reaction from the army and No.2 Wing resulted in this catastrophe.

Never again since Hassu Khel has Tochi Scouts ever been taken by surprise, lesson was learnt through the hard way but it has been learnt. It is paramount to know the culture and back ground of the area, always be prepared for any eventuality and above all never to establish any post in haste.

US Raid on Saidgai 6/7 January 2006

On the same very night when Hassu Khel Post was under attack, another attack was underway at Saidgai where American gunship helicopters entered Pakistan territory at 0300 hours and fired the missiles at 0305 hours in the same area where Tochi Scouts had carried out search operations on 5th January. Americans landed the helicopters near the compounds of Salala Mir & Noor Muhammad, conducted a search at 0340 hours and flew back at 0435 hours, leaving behind six dead and six wounded natives and taking away two wanted persons; Gul Badshah and Rehmat Shah.

The events of the first week of the year in the agency set the temperature very high on military and political front. The two incidents of Hassu Khel and American raid on Saidgai were not inter linked but now they were constructed as one by the locals. Pakistan Army helicopters conducted search operations on the day of Hassu Khel attack {7th January} and resultantly one car was hit, eight men of Village Idar Khel were arrested and put into jail.

Improvised Explosive Device {IED} 30th January 2006

The resistance against the Russian invasion in Afghanistan is always synonym with the Stinger anti-aircraft missile, the present insurgency in the Pakistan and in NWA have IEDs apart from suicide bombers as trademark. A simple and easy to make, construct, place and explode yet with deadly results. An IED requires an electronic detonator, a detonation wave carrier, it uses radio frequency, TNT Powder or slabs. The power unit can be purchased locally which is commercial battery. Varieties of explosives were employed by the miscreants which included anti-tank mines, mortar bombs and anti-personnel mines. Tochi Scouts after coming under the operational control of army had the primary responsibility of ensuring the safe passage of convoys thus it included detection and removal of IED's. Between 7th June 2005 – 30th December 2005, Tochi Scouts detected 12 IED's at places like Alwara Mandi, Machi Khel, Ghulam Khan, Tarnol Piquet, British Cemetery, Chashmai Bridge, Idak Fort, Saidgi Fort, Darga Mandi and Khawaja Jan Chowk.

IED detection is not easy; they are light and can be hidden or placed anywhere. At British Cemetery it was dug in the ground close to the road, At Chashmai Bridge it was hidden in the rocks on the turn, at other time inside a tree and then on another day in a drain passing close to the road. Tochi Scouts diffused 14 such devices and 11 other were exploded by the miscreants. Which resulted in 9 Shaheeds and 56 injured, four military vehicles were partially damage including two of FC and three were completely destroyed. On 30th January 2006 at 1040 hours a convoy of Swat and Kurram Militia who were under command Tochi Scouts had an IED blast near Isha Post resultantly 13 scouts were injured. On the same day another IED was exploded at Khajauri without causing any damage. IED's thus compelled the army drivers to drive fast which resulted in many accidents most notable being on 2nd February 2007 when a vehicle of 12 Sind overturned resulting in serious injuries to 17 soldiers including one officer.

IED's thus imposed restriction on the military movement, Road Operating Days were introduced, and use of jammers was another step taken to counter these. In a briefing to the IGFC the commandant Tochi Scouts on 11th January recommended that cash prizes for informers, pioneer platoon and bomb disposal squad be introduced.

MiranShah City had few craftsmen who were master in making these IED's and were in great demand they were mainly Uzbek, most notorious was the Immad Uzbek another was Khabrooz, the last one had his workshop at MirAli. He was charging approximately .3 Million Rupees for making one IED

Ides of March 2006

MiranShah remained the key to the success of military operation in North Waziristan Agency; Fort was and is a symbol of the state's authority. Any intrusion into it would have caused an irreparable damage to the dignity and morale of the Tochi Scouts and army.

On 9th February 2006 a single rocket attack was launched in which the rocket landed at the northern edge of the runway at 2220 hours without causing any damage, in retaliation six rounds of artillery were fired. On next night another rocket was launched against the fort, this time eight rounds of artillery were fired back. On 13th February Cobra attack helicopters were employed, they fired four rockets on the suspected place from where the rockets were launched on to the fort and garrison.

The month of March started with an operation by the SSG in Saidgai {Operation Noor Payo} at Saidgai on 1st March, it resulted in one fatal casualty and seventeen other soldiers wounded {army}. Noor Payo himself was not captured but his two daughters along with 25 foreigners were reportedly killed, his two sons {Marjan & Syed Ali were wounded, captured and later treated at Tochi Scouts hospital}. This resulted in all-out attack on the MiranShah Garrison. Maulvi Abdul Khaliq was the main instigator. Within an hour {1215 – 1320 hours} 17 rockets were fired on the Garrison another five were fired at 2140 hours.

On 2nd March the Pakistan Telephone Corporation Limited {PTCL} exchange on the eastern edge of Garrison was taken over by the miscreants. Political administration had to talk with the Maulvi Abdul Khaliq to get the exchange cleared, he agreed but as a bargain the Tochi Scouts post in the city Khawarza Chowk had to be vacated. Operation to clear the PTCL building was carried out by the Tochi Scouts, Captain Altaf Hussain who had joined the Tochi Scouts as a Ghazi Officer in August 2005 was in charge of the Chigha Platoon which carried out the operation on 6th March 2006. At 0515 hours on 6th March the Chigha Platoon entered the PTCL building, telephonic link was restored at by 0900 hours. It was this display of force which compelled the miscreants to vacate the building.

4th March was a normal day, nothing unusual took place till evening but at 1645 hours, and three missiles were fired from the city side which landed inside the fort, killing one and injuring four soldiers of Tochi Scouts. Faqir Taj Mohmand embraced shahadat while Ijtahad Ali Turi, Ikram Ali Turi, Ghaffar Ali Orakzai and Idrees Khattak were injured. In retaliation miscreants positions were hit hard with artillery. Subedar Amir Nawab Khattak, Havildar Khalid Iqbal Khattak, Lance Naik Nateef Ur Rehman Khattak & Naik Manzoor Afridi of Thall Medium Battery fired 19 rounds in first ten minutes, all in all they fired 63 rounds of medium artillery.

It was not just a case of firing missiles rather the miscreants had gathered around the western edge of garrison but stiff and accurate fire by Sargardan Post spoiled their efforts. Havildar Mobeen Afridi, Havildar Misl Khan Khattak {later embraced shahadat due to missile

attack in 2007} Naik Ismat Gul Khattak all led by Naib Subedar Syed Arif Hussain Turi were mentioned in despatches for their boldness and courage.

On the same day at almost same time {1645 hours} another attack was planned and executed by the miscreants on the north-eastern wall there by attacking the political agent's colony; aim was to establish a foothold in the garrison. This attack was thwarted by the timely action, co-ordination, determination and better firing standards of Tochi Scouts. Sepoy Sajid Hussain Turi, Lance Naik Dilbar Hussain Turi, Lance Naik Akhtar Ali Bangash, Havildar Rehman Ullah Mohmand, Sepoy Liaqat Hussain Turi he was having a mere year service in Tochi Scouts were mentioned in despatches for their valour. The attack which was launched at 1645 hours initially did not had much of strength but with every passing moment the miscreants were growing in numbers. In this background the action of Tochi Scouts needs to be studied. This section held the attackers at bay for an hour before further reinforcement could join in defending the garrison. Naib Subedar Ali Zeb Bangash was also commended for his leadership qualities. Co-ordination of own fire was a tantamount task, there were recoilless rifles, artillery, heavy machine gun and mortars available for a befitting reply. Major Syed Kamran Hashmi as intelligence officer of Tochi Scouts was equal to the task. No.5 Wing was responsible for the inner perimeter defence, its wing commander Lieutenant Colonel Zafar Ullah Khan was also mention in despatches for his inspirational leadership under the tiring circumstance.

On 17th March another rocket attack was launched on the fort when two missiles landed near stadium without causing any injury.

As a punitive measure and to curb any further attacks on the fort the dominating points and buildings in the city which included the water reservoir a 150 feet high tower was hit, artillery shells also targeted another high rise building where as the Cobra strafed the water reservoirs on different houses which were acting as sniper and observation posts for the miscreants. Above all Madrasah Gulshan Ul Uloom was demolished, Fazal-e- Ghani Hospital Complex also met the same fate, a number of house facing the eastern wall of the fort were demolished.

GOSH & THALL PIQUET

On 21 March at 0340 hours both the post and piquet came under attack, miscreants fixed the Thall Piquet with mortar fire and physically attacked the Gosh. At Gosh 20 scouts of Mohmand rifles and 14 Tochi Scouts were deployed. Miscreants launched multidirectional attack on both the posts. Gosh had a microwave communication tower as well, the post fought valiantly and blunted the attack. Later artillery fire was brought upon the miscreants.

The night passed peacefully, a disaster was averted and miscreants were taught the lesson that they cannot over run a post any more, however the lessons drawn were also pertinent, which included provision of night vision devices, defence stores and provision of high frequency communication sets.

Tut Narai Post 24th March 2006

By the start of April 2006 Tochi Scouts was manning 80 posts and seven check posts out of which 42 were jointly manned by the army and Tochi Scouts and four check posts

were also jointly manned. No.3 Wing at Datta Khel was manning 16 posts out of which only one post was independent rest all were jointly manned. Tut Narai was one such jointly manned post where army had 15 soldiers and Tochi Scouts had 40 scouts.

Tut Narai made headlines in 1919 when Musa Khan was able to pull a fast one on the North Waziristan Militia, on the night of 26/27th March 2006 this post again came under attack. Major Sajjad Munir Yusafzai was the post commander since 6th March; he was serving in No.3 Wing Tochi Scouts.

Tut Narai is a complex of three positions, the main position situated close to a dry nullah and main track which leads from Datta Khel to the Gardei and Razmak passes like a curving snake thus separating the North-western post from the other two posts. Main Post had three rooms two were occupied by the Khassadars and the Tochi Scouts and the third room by the 5th Northern Light Infantry {NLI}; it also had a lawn and a mosque. Apart from this main position the post had two more protection posts, 500 yards away on the Northwest which is 250 meters higher than the main post and was manned by the Tochi Scouts, the other protection post located 150 yards towards the Southwest and 50 meters higher than the main post was manned by the 5 NLI. In terms of tribes Manzar Khel occupied the northern and southern edges of the post whereas Khaddar Khel inhabited the western edge. The post is covered by high ground all around; the lone heli pad is across the track from the post gate.

The Tochi Scouts protection post was located next to the track junction from where apart from the main track a branch track leads towards a civilian house across the nullah. The size of hillock on which the protection post was sited had length of 125 yards and with of 30 yards. This post had barbed wire all around; post itself is in elongated shape having two machine gun bunkers on each end with a living room in the mid, latrines on its east and kitchen on the south west. There were eight trenches which starting from Northwest were numbered as 1- 8. Trench No.2 and No.5 were the machine gun trenches and No.3 was a RPG- 7 trench. The housing {living, latrine, kitchen} in the middle thus divides the whole post into two parts, limiting observation and fire among the various trenches on both sides. Post had a wall about four feet high and thirty yards away from the protection post itself, it was in a depression, ahead of wall barbed wire was placed for protection. A black rock on the south-eastern edge restricted the observation and fire.

On the night of 23/24th all the three complexes were simultaneously put under fire initially and later physical assault was carried out on the Tochi Scouts post. Naib Subedar Shafi Ur Rehman Wazir was the post commander at the Tochi Post {Northern} with fourteen other scouts. At 0235 hours while he was walking in between the trenches as per his routine to see how the things are he heard the first burst of fire, he jumped into the nearest trench and opened up the fire, soon the fire started coming from all the three direction{Northern, North-eastern & South-eastern}. After emptying his two magazines he calmed his nerves and started observing for the miscreants' direction of fire, it was dark night and amidst this solitude the shattering noise of fire, rocket grenades and machine gun rounds hitting the lone bunker and then ricocheting all around was nerve wrecking. Shafi had been in Tochi Scouts since 1987, he calmed his nerves and crawled to another trench to raise the morale of his scouts, at the next trench which was a RPG-7 trench with Sepoy Gulzar and Naik Munir Hussain manning

it; he fired a round himself towards a flash, his hand got burnt, Naik Munir was hesitant to fire citing a blockage in the launcher as the reason on which Shafi had to demonstrate. The miscreants pushed forward and reached the eastern edge of the post. Sepoy Arshad Khan died on the spot in his trench with his hand still on the machine gun trigger.

As the miscreants reached inside the post compound the Naik Munir, Sepoys Saifullah, Adil Rehman, Muhammad Iqbal, Lehaaz Muhammad and Rozi Khan moved into the alternate position which made the whole matter complex. Thus with the abandoning of trench No.1,4 and 5 the miscreants were able to crawl to the trench No. 1 and the machine gun trench taking away in the end one LMG, one RPG-7, one Rifle G-3 . However the other trenches kept their wits about and were able to keep the miscreants at bay otherwise they would have over run the whole complex.

Naik Shakoor Jan Wazir was the duty NCO at the time of firing, the procedure at vogue on the posts was to have a guard of two sepoy with one NCO as guard commander, it at night gives ample time of rest to everyone. This is the advantage which attacker enjoys over the defender as he has the freedom of action. Defender on the other hand cannot remain vigilant all the time, it may takes weeks or even months before a post is attacked thus a routine is adopted where everyone on the post is at various level of readiness. The two sentries on two hour watch thus are the first one to react, other takes minutes to wake up, put on the shoes and then rush to their respective trenches. Shakoor narrates that the first volley of fire was from the eastern edge and sentry fired back and then came the fire from the front and from the left, it was intense. I fired 173 rounds of machine gun before it was double feed, Sepoy Arshad Khan was with me and then he had gone to the trench no 8 where he embraced shahadat. The machine gun post was slightly higher than the rest of other trenches and as such was the main target of miscreants fire, the distance between the southern and northern walls to the trenches was about 30 yards { after the incident these were reduced}.

Sepoy Majid Ullah Mohmand was the sentry in the trench no. 6 which was on the South-western direction when all this started, 'I had three magazines of ammunition Rifle G-3 filled which I fired, and it took me almost twenty minutes to do so then I shouted to Sepoy Muntazim to bring more magazines to me, the miscreants were shouting that " Ismail has died {he was probably one of the attacker}''.

In the end the miscreants were able to get away from the post with one LMG, one RPG-7, one Motorola and few magazines of the ammunition, later in the morning the RPG-7 was found abandoned in the nullah.

Miscreants might have done more damage but due to the timely intervention of the Cobra Attack helicopter at 0410 hours, which created more of deterrent than actual damage. The reason being that there was no difference among the attacker and defender, Cobra had the night vision devices but any firing of machine gun with precision was not possible thus few rockets which they fired landed away from the post. Artillery fire was also brought but it had no impact rather calling any fire upon own troops is demoralising. Tut Narai Post fired 1720 rounds of G-3, 180 rounds of SMG, 2050 rounds of LMG, three rockets and also threw 19 high explosives grenades onto the miscreants. There was no separate bunker for ammunition rather it was placed in the living bunker.

Tut Narai Post action on that night is an example of human conduct and behaviour under stress and fear. On that night there were fifteen soldiers representing seven different tribes yet the behaviour of all varied; even among themselves. Naib Subedar Shafi Ur Rehman Wazir stood the test and inspired every one under his command with bravery and exemplary courage. However he failed to inspire few odd individuals{ four in number} who could not take the stress of the attack and abandoned the post the top most was the Rozi Khan who fled and took refuge in a nullah four hundred meters away and came back to the post at 0700 hours.

A thorough court of inquiry was conducted which recommended that the army and scouts posts be amalgamated and no independent post of scouts should be maintained within a complex of posts, it also recommended that Tut Narai post itself should be abandoned²⁸⁴. In the end it was confirmed that post had been able to kill six miscreants and injured nine others. GOC 7 Division visited the post and lauded the action of Tochi Scouts and gave cash prize of Rupees seven thousand²⁸⁵. IGFC Major General Alam Khattak however ordered strict disciplinary action against the Major Sajjad Munir Yusafzai the No.3 Wing Commander who himself was present at the main post for weak command and control, Sepoys Adil Rehman, Lehas Muhammad, Rozi Khan and Muhammad Iqbal for deserting the post.

British Cemetery Last Guard, 23rd April 2006.

British Cemetery inside the city on its South-eastern edge is more of a Tochi Scouts Cemetery, as it was being maintained by the scouts. The majority of graves inside are of those British officers who died here with their boots on. It is worth mentioning that Tochi has been maintaining and is still looking after the graves of Afghan Mujahedeen, this graveyard is in front of the Northern gate. Tochi Scouts is a cultural icon of the valley and tries to preserve all the cultural and military heritage of the valley irrespective of which side of coin they belong. The library, Masjid e Muhajeeren and museum apart from the Yadgaar are few of the examples. The guard in the British Cemetery is one of the oldest in Tochi Scouts; the guard is not primarily for the cemetery alone but is known as such, the other old guard is Serai guard.

On 23rd April 2006 at 1045 hours Sepoy Qayyum Shah Mohmand was standing on guard at the cemetery when a car passing by opened fire hitting him on the chest, he died on spot but his two other comrades were alert and they without wasting any time returned the fire, this duel lasted for twelve minutes at the end two miscreants namely Asad and Wali were killed and other two namely Liaqat Ali and Sharifullah were arrested. As a precaution the Cemetery Guard was discontinued, later all graves were defaced by the Taliban. Qayyum was born on 11th August 1984 in a small village by the name of Dhund in District Charsadda, he joined Tochi Scouts after passing his matriculation examination on 21st November 2004, and he was posted in No.5 Wing at Boya.

²⁸⁴ Recommendations of the court, dated 28th April 2006, court was headed by Major Saleem Qadir with Captain Saqib and Subedar Habib Jan Afridi as members.

²⁸⁵ Tochi Scouts letter No. 5305/7 of 28th August 2006.

Suicide Attacks, May - June 2006

Miscreants changed their tactics and along with attacking the post physically or with rockets they now resorted to the suicidal attacks on the check posts, the aim was to force the militia and army to remove these check posts thus giving them free hand to travel at any time of day.

Hurmaz School MirAli Check Post was the first to be hit with suicide attack when on 20th May 2006 at 1015 hours Sepoy Muhammad Laiq Afridi and Sepoy Waheed Rehman Khattak both from No.2 Wing were performing the duty of checking every vehicle. Laiq was looking at the rear compartment of a Land Cruiser when Waheed noticed a bearded man walking briskly towards them, the man put hands in his pocket and threw two hand grenades on these scouts. Laiq died instantly, Waheed stood there when he was hit with a burst of SMG from the southern side, and he also had his last breath there. Sepoy Ghazi ur Rehman Orakzai the third sentry took the positions and fired at the direction of incoming fire, he moved towards his fallen scouts, in the process he also received a bullet on his thigh.

Very next day Datta Khel Check Post was made target when on 28th May 2006 another bearded suicide bomber in mid-thirties blew himself at the check post resulting in the death of Lance Naik Muhammad Ashraf Mohmand and injuring Subedar Shams Ul Haq Wazir, Naik Zulfiqar Alam Khattak and Sepoy Mir Hassan Jan Turi. One khassadar also embraced shahadat. The check post was made of mud bricks and on the track leading towards the Tut Narai, it was in a clump of trees, there were two other protection posts almost fifty yards behind and the main post was hundred meters away and same distance high on a crow flight but on ground a track leads to it in a winding pattern. The layout was as per the teaching but it was good for a physical attack and not for the suicidal attack. Suicide bomber had used a white station car; the power of blast threw the parts of the car to the other two posts as well. The post itself was subject to physical attack when on 4th June 2006 indiscriminate fire was opened on it. The ensuing fire fight which started after the attack later caused serious injuries to Sepoy Kamal Shah Bhattani. The attack had started at 0145 hours while Kamal was on duty, he fired back and as per teaching he moved to change his firing position, he was hit with a bullet on his left foot during the manoeuvre.

In June, Isha Post came under suicide attack on 26th June 2006; routine checking was in progress, Sepoy Abid Ullah was having a thorough inspection of a Hiace, when he noticed a white Suzuki car moving from MiranShah towards MirAli accelerating pass the already parked vehicle. Subedar Siraj Gul also noticed this and he almost came in front of the white Suzuki, Abid also rushed behind the car. The vehicle at that instant blew up.

It killed Subedar Siraj Gul Khattak instantly and injured Sepoy Abid Ullah Wazir. Isha Check Post crossing point then was narrow and had the posts on both sides of the road. The northern post was higher and much bigger in size but the one used for the checking of the vehicles and persons was a makeshift and almost at the road level. The blast waves not only destroyed the small post on the road but also played havoc with the bigger post ripping its roof and walls. Attack took place at 1730 hours and luckily majority of the sepoy's had taken their food earlier on that day otherwise the figure of casualties would have been much higher. Isha was a post manned jointly by the Tochi, Thall and Swat Scouts troops, there were 23

scouts injured apart from three khassadars. Sepoy Abid Ullah took his last breath at Bannu CMH, apart from two shaheeds of Tochi Scouts four other scouts and one khassadar also embraced shahadat. Havildar Saif Ur Rehman Wazir, Sepoys Ijaz Ahmed Afridi, Rehmat Ullah Afridi and Asif Raza Khattak of Tochi Scouts were among the injured.

Banda Post - June 2006, a Case of Extreme Casualness.

Banda Post was established on 26th July 2005 at a distance of six kilometres south east of MiranShah, it was almost 500 feet higher on a ridge surrounded by villages of Banda and Anghar, a track passes below it almost 750 yards away which leads across a road then to a spring amidst woods onwards to the Tochi River, usually a platoon manned it. Creating a post is not difficult in terms of manpower the problem is of sustaining it with fresh water for drinking and provision of fresh rations. The dry rations can be stored for months like flour, sugar, tea, rice, pulses but that cannot sustain the troops, and they require fresh items like vegetables. Fresh meat is again not much of an issue as meat on hoof can be provided to the posts. Fresh water is even a bigger issue, the area generally is void of water and these posts are at higher ground thus the fresh water for drinking is a major logistic night mare. At many posts the water is stored for week but then it has its own drawbacks thus it is always preferred to maintain a fresh supply of ration and water. Thus donkeys and mules are of paramount importance in the sustenance of any post. In army the supply corps is responsible for the logistic provisions but in Frontier Corps the same is done through private contractors or by giving money to the troops to buy it themselves; it proved fatal at Banda Post.

The fresh contractor was threatened by the Taliban to stop the supply to the posts and he complied, Banda Post scouts thus resorted with buying the fresh items from the nearby village through the children. Mali {gardener} Damsaz of Tochi Scouts is a resident of MiranShah Village, he is an old man in his mid-sixties, speak very little Urdu and a serving in Tochi Scouts since 1985; he was given the responsibility of this and he fulfilled this task admirably. He at times even took the ammunition and other equipment from the fort in the hired car and dropped them at the base of the post from where the scouts would collect it.

In June 2006 Naib Subedar Rahim Zaman Bangash was commanding it, he arrived on the post on 8th June and till 22nd June the post was fired upon no less than 14 times by the miscreants.

On 23rd June the post ran out of even dry ration which included dry milk, moreover the firewood and sandbags were in perilous quantity thus Rahim sent signal for these and next day these items were received through a civil tractor. Post was able to take them up but still a considerable quantity of firewood was left in open.

On 25th June Rahim went down along with Lance Naik Hafeezullah and Sepoy Sajid Iqbal with an aim to bring the firewood up, to buy the fresh ration and above all to freshen up in the nearby spring. So confident he was or so casual they all were that none was carrying any weapon. For fresh ration he just waved to a passing by car but it sped away, disgusted with the behaviour of the driver, Rahim now reached the spring which had thick growth on both sides and few deserted huts, as he reached near the spring the first shot hit Hafeezullah on the right side of the face he just felt back with the power of the shot. Sepoy Sajid Iqbal who was few steps back simply turned around and ran for the post while Rahim and Hafeez

took cover, in the next second a shot first pierced through the body of running Sajid and other shots hit Rahim. Naik Rytan Ali was the senior at the post and he already had his apprehension about the new post commander who had gone down without even informing him to cover him, he made a mental note to talk about this when he arrives back.

Sepoy Yar Muhammad Bangash had a service of nine years and was the sentry at the post when Sajid was hit, as a sentry he had been watching them going down the track, waving to the car and then he just looked at the other end to make sure that nothing untoward happen during his tenure of duty. He again gazed at the party going towards the spring which was 200 yards away and the very thought of fresh water created ripples in his own body it had been almost three days that he had not taken any bath for the reason that there was no water on the post for such luxury. *‘ I observed that they had suddenly sat down on the ground, then started running in different direction and again falling on the ground, I immediately realised that something has gone wrong, Naik Rytan Ali the next senior also came and immediately started firing in the woods, the complete post was now stand to and firing on to the woods, after fifteen minutes, Rytan and I decided to go down because all three of our comrades were lying unconscious, Sepoy Mateen also volunteered to come with us, rest of the post provided us fire cover, when we reached at the fallen comrades I saw that all of them have been hit with bullets, blood was oozing profusely from various parts, I saw a car passing by and waved it, it stopped but driver was not willing to take these wounded back to MiranShah for the fear of Taliban, meanwhile I saw Mali Damsaz who normally comes with our fresh ration, he ran towards us and it was he who convinced the driver to take these wounded , he accepted the loss if any that will occur to the car and then sat with the wounded bodies and took them to the MiranShah ’*

Sepoy Sajid Iqbal recalls those moments when he was hit with bullets *‘ I first saw Hafeez being hit because I heard the noise of bullet, as an instinct I ran back towards the post while I still heard Naib Subedar Rahim shouting me to hit the ground but before I could comply with, I felt a shock wave passing through my left shoulder and micro seconds later I felt the same sensations in my left leg, due to shock I hit the ground and it was then I realised that I have been hit with bullets, the pain was not much more like needles pricking but mind suffered the most, I could feel blood drenching out of my body, the last thoughts that came to my mind were that of my mother ’*

Hafeezullah Wazir who received the first bullet had similar feelings of being hit, *‘ I was hit in the leg first and when due to recoil I bent I received another stinging blow in my face, I did not realised at that moment that I have been hit with a bullet , but when the noise followed the shock pain then I came to know that I am hit, I don’t remember anything from that point onwards, all I recall is that I am in a car and then varying faces and voices started coming into my mind, I had recollections of my parents, family and then another cloud.’*

This was a classic tale of bravery amidst violation of standing orders procedures{SOP’s}, the troops especially the platoon commanders were still living in an aura and ear of friendly environments and had to pay dearly for such hallucinations.

In an another related incident which took place at Ismail Khel Post, three scouts two from Tochi and one from Swat Scouts performing the duty at Ismail Khel Post had similar

experience on 7th April 2006 when all three had gone down from the post along with two donkeys to fetch fresh water for the post, only two were armed both from Tochi Scouts {Naik Amanullah Wazir with SMG & Sepoy Shad Ali Khan Wazir with Rifle G-3}. As the party reached the spring, four miscreants who were hiding behind the rocks and had been observing the routine of the post for well over a month suddenly jumped on these scouts, without giving them any reaction time to even straighten their rifles, they put their shining daggers on to their throats and gave the warning, 'one word and you will be slaughtered like a lamb'. They then tied their hands and stuffed their mouths and walked away with two rifles and donkeys. Later these were released from their bondage by another party who also searched for the missing weapons and surprisingly found G-3 almost 200 yards away but there was no trace of the SMG.

It is in circumstances like this that the name of Havildar Karrar Shah Afridi comes into mind, who during 1942 Datta Khel attack had made sure that his recruit not only retrieve his weapon but also his turban despite being injured and with enemy firing.

PEACE TALKS

The efforts for peace had been going on since mid-January 2006 after the two deadly attacks one on Hassu Khel and other on Sarbandkai, the sole reason was the American raid on Saidgai on 6th January 2006. In the jirga held on 26th January 2006 presided by the Political Agent and attended by Malak Ghulabat Khan, Maulana Dindar, Maulana Nek Zaman, Maulana Muhammad Alam, Malak Shireen Akbar, Malak Afzal, Malak Shahzad and Malak Tooti Gul{ it is no surprise that the numbers of religious persons now challenges the traditional malaks}. It was a volatile jirga which was hijacked by the religious leaders, Maulana Nek Zaman was a member of national assembly whereas Maulana Dindar is the same person who attacked the Boya Fort in 1965.

Political agent initially tried to be on offensive asking them to hand over the wanted persons who are involved in attacks on the military posts, the jirga demanded that the state should take action against the Americans for violating their dignity and why the military has failed to protect them. Political agent countered them by stating that there are spies among you who have given the information to the Americans in greed of dollars and above all why you people are giving refugee to the wanted persons, when army and militia carries out arid then you fire back. In the end none could agree other and it dispersed.

A day earlier on 24th January 2006 a delegation of religious persons led by Maulana Abdur Rehman had gone to Dera Ismail Khan to meet the leader of opposition Maulana Fazal Ur Rehman {all religious parties in NWA are affiliated with the Fazal Ur Rehman party}. Maulana Fazal spoke in nationalist manner and it was agreed that no one will give the protection to foreigners and all religious seminaries will get themselves registered. All mosques and madrasah did not agree with these instructions. On 6th January 2006 in another jirga held at Darpa Khel among the Uthmanzai and Taliban, they demanded that the freedom of crossing the border be given to Taliban, all check post on main roads be removed, the very people with whom we are residing should not be put under pressure and above all, all our arrested Taliban should be released.

Baitullah Mahsud and Abdullah Mahsud two wanted rebel commanders had addressed a Friday sermon on 20th January at Spelga and openly called the people to carry out jihad against the state, a day earlier on 18th January they had meeting at Degan where the locals had requested them to stop the fighting in NWA²⁸⁶

The people of the agency were divided in two factions one was in favour of the military and state and other wanted militancy. Mostly the religious seminaries {not all} but unregistered were in favour of second option for instance AlMarkaz Ul Uloom at Alwara Mandi an unregistered madrasah headed by Maulana Fatah Ullah having a strength of 60/65 students with 20 odd Afghani students as well, another madrasah at Maizar under Maulana Shakeel was again unregistered with 80 odd students all under 12 years of age. In the same period a Danish newspaper publish blasphemous cartoons which further added fuel to the already volatile situation. NWA was and still is very sensitive to any world event that creates even an iota of insult regarding the religion.

After the Noor Payo raid the situation became tensed. On 22nd April 2006 IGFC addressed a jirga at MiranShah which was attended by the PA, commandant and other notables. For the continuity sake it is highlighted that on 5th April another major engagement took place between the military and miscreants in which three soldiers of NLI embraced shahadat. IGFC stated that only 2% of population in the agency has made the majority hostage. The malaks in return asked for safe passages to move across the border and suggesting that military should give them passwords for this purpose.

Another Grand Jirga was held on 13th August 2006 in which the Taliban Shura committee asked for the release of all the prisoners before any further progress be made. One of the key issue was the presence of Arab fighters notably Abu Kash and Abu Nasr Groups, they had engaged into marriages with locals, Abu Nasr was married in MirAli area with a Daur family and his sister was also married into locals. Abu Kash had erected the check posts of his own group as well; this put him at odds with Maulana Sadiq Noor Group. They had almost drawn the weapons on each other on 12th August 2006 at Hurmaz Daur area.

The Jirga on 23th August again failed to reach a consensus, all these moves were initiated by the PA who assured the jirga that the answers to their queries will be given on 24th August after meeting of Governor NWFP with the President of Pakistan and till that time the cease fire will remain in force. On the same night or next day these Taliban leaders including Hafiz Gul Bahadur Mada Khel Wazir who led the other members reached Bannu where they met Maulana Fazal Ur Rehman.

On 25th August 2006 at Khatti Killi the Taliban or their jirga extended the cease fire for another fifteen days, on the same day at another jirga held at Idak Maulana Dindar Hassu Khel Daur was elected as the president of Jama'iat Ulema Islam {Fazal Rehman Group}. Finally the very demand of Taliban was accepted when on 26th August 2006 the PA released ten prisoners demanded by the Jirga. The rest of the prisoners numbering thirteen went on a hunger strike from 30th August onwards; they finally ended their hunger strike after assurance

²⁸⁶ Intelligence report of Tochi Scouts dated 1st February 2006; source of the report was in attendance at both places.

from PA on 31st August that they all will be released next day. On the same day {31st August} another grand jirga was held at MiranShah presided by PA Doctor Fakhr Alam who agreed to the release of all prisoners on 1st September and also to return all confiscated material, above all the state will pay the damages incurred to the local and in return all looted weapons from the military will be handed back.

Friday 1st September 2006 was a hectic day with multiple meetings taking place at various places and hideouts, end result was that a ten members committee will be formed to look after the peace and the pact in the agency. On 2nd September at 1130 hours the draft copy of the pact was scrutinised by the Taliban Shura and Grand Jirga at Madrasah Ashrafia at MiranShah and finally they all agreed on the draft copy, Taliban were led by hafiz Gul Bahadur, at 1700 hours they all signed at the Circuit House {Taliban Commanders did not signed} thus grand jirga was able to bring peace in the agency after a lapse of nine months, Taliban Commanders agreed to sign on 5th September.

Army {19 FF & 23 AK} as part of the pact closed down certain posts included Boya and Machis {only Tochi Scouts were allowed to remain there}, Tochi closed down PTCL, Colony, from Kalanjar I the 19FF pulled back its troops thus only Tochi was left there, army also recalled troops from Thall Piquet, Tut Narai Post {mines were also removed}, Dardonii II and Sarbandkai Posts.

5th September 2006, Pact Signed.

On 5th September 2006 at 1130 hours a grand jirga was held at MiranShah in which peace pact was signed, GOC 7 Division, Commandant Tochi Scouts Lieutenant Colonel Bilal, Political Agent North Waziristan Agency, Taliban commanders and over 350 local malaks and ulemas attended it, Political agent signed it on behalf of the state and on behalf of Taliban it was signed by the seven Maulana, Holy Koran was made as witness.

Army returned three double cabins, one single cabin, one land cruiser, 22 Kalashnikovs, one .303 Rifle, two .30 pistols and one movie camera. In return Taliban handed back four Rifle G-3 along with 237 rounds, one beret, four uniform belts and one bandolier. It is obvious that this all was customary and cosmetic in nature but more important than this was the peace in the agency.

On very next day as a sign of good will Taliban arrested one suspicious man and handed it over to the 7 Division. Tochi Scouts were once again allowed to visit the MiranShah Bazaar and travel in private transport; it seemed as if the good old times are returning.

As a sign of goodwill a friendly volleyball match was played between the Tochi Scouts and civilians on 20th September, few army players were accommodated in the scouts' team. A free mobile medical camp was also established on 17th October 2006 by 117 Brigade, over 433 patients were treated including 206 females and 123 children

2007 a Bloody Year

Year started with Eid Ul Azha prayers at Tochi Stadium at 0835 hours and at 1000 hours Headquarters Logistics 7 Division arranged a tea break for all officers and JCO's of MiranShah Camp; logistics have been very helpful to the Tochi Scouts. The hopes of a

lasting peace in the agency had their last breath in 2007 when a wave of IED's, suicidal attacks, ambush, raids, fire and physical attacks rocked the agency. Statistically only 67 such attacks had taken place till September 2006, out of which 24 such incidents occurred in July alone. Therefore in the two years period since army took control only 91 attacks occurred but then from there till February 2008 it touched an all-time high of 426 such incidents. Similarly the casualties which were only 86 shaheeds till September 2006 and 32 in the period till 3rd July 2007, but in the next eleven months there were 215 shaheeds and 480 wounded. The peace pact which was signed on 6th September did not last long and another peace agreement was reached between the government and miscreants on 17th February 2008 which then remained in vogue for a much longer duration and even today the agency is working around the Scarlet Thread of February Pact 2008.

From 2008 onwards the focus of insurgency shifted to the other agencies in which two wings of Tochi Scouts took part and till to date are still deployed outside the NWA. Tochi Scouts did not took part in any major or minor operations as part of Operation AlMizan within the agency in 2007,2008,2009, and only one minor operation was conducted in 2010 and then another in 2011. On the other hand it had to face almost 179 fire raids, IED's and physical attacks

Pakistan itself underwent a drastic change when military regime of President General Musharraf had to hand over the power to newly elected democratic representatives in 2008; within NWFP the religious political parties were defeated in the 2007 general elections. On international front Republican Party of George Bush which had initiated the war against terror in 2001 was ousted from power and Democrats walk into White House, in United Kingdom the Conservatives were replaced by the Labour Party, all these had their impact on the situation in NWA but the one event that affected most was the Lal Masjid incident at Islamabad in 2007 which in reality sent the shock waves in the agency and all events and incidents are related to it.

In 2007 alone Tochi Scouts despite not being part of any operation still suffered 12 shaheeds and 38 wounded, 10 of the scouts were wounded in a single incident at Saidgai. The major cause of all the casualties were the suicidal attacks, ambushes, IED's and fire raids. Water collection by the posts {Banda/ Ismail Khel} was targeted by the miscreants. Old names like Boya, MiranShah, Amin, Ismail Khel and Banda remained in limelight as confirmed hotspots. New names like Machis came into forefront from July 2007 and even today is the source of irritation and all blood spilling along with Amin Piquet. In 2007 there were five suicide attacks, 22 IED attacks, three ambushes and 299 fire raids which were faced by the Tochi Scouts. Between July – 2nd October 2007 alone there were 137 fire raids, two ambushes, two raids and 10 IED's attacks. Nine scouts embraced shahadat and 30 other were injured. The year 2007 had started with a suicide attack on a convoy carrying army on 22nd January near MirAli, Frontier Corps and Tochi Scouts soldiers. Four soldiers lost their lives in this.

Naik Saadat Hussain Bangash embraced shahadat on 30th March 2007 in South Waziristan Agency, he was part of Tochi Scouts but had joined Special Operations Group of Frontier Corps. An excellent football player, he was born in Hangu {Village Ibrahim Zai} on

5th March 1976 and joined Tochi Scouts on 1st January 1994, he was decorated with Tamgha-e- Basalat {posthumous}

In July 2007 alone there 26 fire raids and rocket attacks, in August they rose to 58, in September to 53, in October they decreased down to 37 and finally petered out in November 2007 when only seven such attacks and raids were carried out, again in December they increased to 15 and in January 2008 only one such incident occurred, still five more were carried out against Tochi Scouts in February 2008

20TH JULY 2007 BOYA.

In July 2007 eight additional check posts were established and incidentally all eight were targeted by the miscreants, the year 2007 revolves around these seven Check Posts.

Boya Bridge Check Post was established on 7th July 2007; it was established once before in 2002 also for anti-smuggling purposes but it was burnt within a week by the natives who resented having any check on their movement. An average of 300 vehicles passed through it every day commuting between Boya and MiranShah²⁸⁷. Boya has a special place in the history of Tochi Scouts; the commandant Major Fitz Maurice was shot in the knee in 1940, Tochi Scouts was decorated with two **Sitara –e- Jurat** at Boya in 1957 & 1965. In July 2006 an average of 400 vehicles passed through it and all were checked.²⁸⁸

20th July 2007 was Friday and troops a mixture of Tochi Scouts and 5 NLI had offered their prayers and took their lunch early at the makeshift mess at the bridge. The check post at the bridge was established on the northern bank of Tochi River; it also facilitates the Musa Khan Post and Gharlamai because track to it passes through it. On Road Operating days it used to be crowded as convoys going and coming from Boya, Datta Khel and Gharlamai would halt momentarily to pick or drop letter or parcel from any soldier on post.

Subedar Major Gul Nawaz Bhattani who retired in October 2012 after completion of 23 years of service was a subedar then and standing at the post chatting with Lance Naik Abdus Salam Khattak and Sepoy Lal Baz who were on duty. There were 20 soldiers of NLI and equal number of Tochi Scouts present on the post. Gul Nawaz turned towards the mess which was located at a stone throw on the western edge slightly higher than the road, while he was climbing up he noticed a black Surf {Toyota} coming from Degan and an ambulance coming from MiranShah direction, he shrugged of his shoulders and shouted to a scout who was walking without a helmet. Moments later an earth shattering noise ripped the otherwise calm peace of the area, there was a debris and smoke in the air. Gul Nawaz felt the tremors of the shock and hit the ground, regaining his conscious moments later and then realising that an attack has taken place rushed towards the road; it was not a physical attack rather a suicide attack.

Lance Naik Abdus Salam saw the Surf approaching from the southern bank at a high speed and he waved from his protective bunker made of sand bags to stop but the driver instead of stopping, sped and hit the protective embankment and with it he blew himself, taking the life of Abdus Salam in the process, Naik Sajjad lost his hearing due to the

²⁸⁷ Situation Report No.478/2006 Dated 29 August 2006. Tochi Scouts archives.

²⁸⁸ Tochi Scouts letter No.5354/54/G of 19th July 2006.

shockwaves. The opposing ambulance had just reached the check post at that precise moment, it stopped for routine checking when the opposing Prado approached and the driver of Prado had no option but to blow himself up. The driver of the ambulance died on the spot, the patients inside the ambulance an old man, an old woman, his daughter and their two grown up children all had serious burns and were later evacuated to MiranShah for medical treatment.²⁸⁹

FIRE RAIDS & ROCKET ATTACKS-2007

The year 2007 from July onwards witnessed an unprecedented volume of fire raids and rocket attacks but they did not cause as much damage as the volume of attacks suggested. One key factor was better preparation of the military, posts were better equipped with weapons, ammunition and protective walls. The soldiers and scouts now were mentally in a state of mind where the danger was appreciated and precautionary steps taken in advance.

MiranShah Garrison bore the brunt of such attacks; almost all attacks were conducted in the dark hours. On 17/18th July 2007, Political Agent's Colony and Headquarters & Division along with the Tochi Fort were made the target. These attacks started from 30th June, and lasted till 1st August. PTCL and British Cemetery were also hit on 30/31st July, on the same night Banda Post, Wacha Bibi, Ganderi and Amin as usual received the indiscriminate fire and stray rockets.

IED

One of the most effective weapon in the hand of miscreants after the suicide bombing was and still is the improvised explosive devices which are difficult to detect but are lethal in nature. The usual pattern adopted by mid-2007 was to physical carry out an inspection of the road and route for these IEDs before the passage of convoys. On 23rd July 2007, No.2 Wing deployed at Gharlamai was performing this task on Khar Kamar – Baramand route for safe and secure passage of 56 Baluch regiment convoy when at 1555 hours one of the IED exploded. Lance Naik Muhammad Khan Afridi, Lance Naik Adam Khan Orakzai and sepoy Aman Ullah Turi and Faiz Ullah Afridi were injured. Faiz got both his wrists fractured, Aman was hit in the face, and Adam also got fracture in his right leg whereas Muhammad Khan had a blunt trauma in right eye. Miscreants normally covered these IEDs with small arms fire and this is what happened here also, as soon as it exploded there was indiscriminate fire and then silence. Field Battery of Tochi Scouts fired seven rounds of artillery shells. Evacuation of casualties is an important task and it is a tribute to all that no casualty has ever been left or delayed at the post by military. Army aviators also needs commendation that irrespective of the risks involved they were always there for evacuation, all the injured scouts were getting the medical treatment at MiranShah by the end of the day.

The same pattern lasted in August and September as well with MiranShah Garrison being hit on nine nights in the month of August and eight times in September and if one includes the outer and inner perimeter post then there was hardly any night in which there was no fire duel. On 3rd august 2007 Kalanjar I & II, Amin I & Amin II all were attacked and in return 86 rounds of 12.7 mm gun, 226 rounds of LMG. 74 rounds of SMG and 713 rounds

²⁸⁹ Tochi Scouts letter No. 5354/54/G of 20 July 2007. AIMizan situation Report No.404/2007.

of G-3 apart from lone RPG-7 were fired by these posts.²⁹⁰ Data Khel received eight rockets between 0315 -0400 hours on 4th August without causing any damage but it disrupts the working pattern of the scouts, leaving very little time to unwind.

Another day to remember is the 2nd October 2007 when intelligence reports indicated attack on MiranShah Fort & Garrison; it was received through intercept at 0055 hours because for all practical purpose the intelligence outfits were confined within the boundary walls of garrison. At 0105 hours {ten minutes after intercept} the attack was launched on the fort with heavy intense fire coming from MiranShah Bazaar direction on Stadium Check post, WAPDA Piquet, College Piquet, PTCL Building, Amin Piquet, Amin-II Check Post and British Cemetery Check Post. Own troops responded with artillery, mortars and small arms fire, intense fire continued for 45 minutes then reducing to sporadic for thirty minutes. Miscreants fired 15 rockets in this period. Same night Mangaseen Check post was also attacked. Cobras despite being serviceable were not employed. MiranShah faced another such onslaught on 5th October when another fifteen rockets were fired within a time span of half an hour, they all landed within a radius of 300 meters, and three soldiers of army were wounded.

Army aviation assets at MiranShah reached an all-time high with eight Cobras, two Bell 412, two MI-17 and one Jet Ranger. Two Cobras remained grounded for over a week. Special Operation task force {SOTF} was also located at MiranShah apart from Headquarters of 7 Division, two infantry brigades and divisional artillery.

Army and Tochi Scouts adopted a simple but effective countermeasure; to retaliate with full fire power. This tendency was cut short and on 5th July 2007 instructions were passed to all the wings not to open fire without recognising the target or unless target is within range.

On 12th October 2007 when MiranShah Fort and Garrison was put under fire attack then 841 rounds of LMG and 115 rounds of 12.7 mm gun were fired as comparison only 149 rounds of Rifle G-3 were expended which indicates the over reliance on machine gun fire rather than rifle fire.. Military could have finished off these miscreants nuisance within days but it was the care for collateral damage which binds the hands of military fire power. Every shell was fired with lot of calculation and after repeatedly cross checking the damage assessment. Small arms were different ball and game. Sentries at night are alert for extensive hours and it takes heavy toll on reflexes, any lapse on their part can endanger the safety of complete post.

These fire raids were erratic but even then they stalled aviation efforts when on 17th October 2007 two rocket splinters hit Bell 412 and Mi-17 resulting in a hole of three inch. It was in 2012 that aviation erected a soft fabric hangar which is meant for maintenance and not for protection. The early protection that was made possible for the helicopters after this was in having a mud wall around parking bay, this was economical, time saving and good enough for protection from splinters. The need to have a concrete pen is still being felt. It must be kept in mind that PAF lost one of its F-16 before they erected a wall around their bases similarly Army Aviation has also suffered operational setbacks through splinters yet there is

²⁹⁰ 7 Division Situation Report Dated 30th August 2007, No.500/42/Situation/GS/ {ops}

no concrete pens for helicopters. It was at end October that PAF started giving serious thoughts of using the MiranShah strip for C-130 aircraft.

RED OCTOBER

There are days which needs to be remembered purely for the lessons they give, one learns from own mistakes. 6th October 2007 was one such day when an frontier Corps convoy while coming back to MirAli from Jallar was ambushed, ‘ it disengaged from the situation by retaliating immediately and reached MirAli camp safely leaving behind a damaged vehicle’²⁹¹

77 Brigade planned an immediate operation to retrieve the vehicle and in doing so also decided to punish the village suspected of such act. Two companies each from 11 Baloch & 15 Sind Regiments, one company of 59 Baloch Regiment and a task force comprising of 67 all ranks of Frontier Corps including Tochi Scouts along with requisite engineers party for demolishing , medical and signals were made ready, all in all 682 all ranks were put together.

11 Baluch with FC was made responsible for securing the route to the Tochi River by having picquets including one at Tochi River. 15 Sind and 59 Baluch Regiments to recover the vehicle and after doing so demolish the houses and then everyone to fall back. It was expected that by the end of day it will be over, but it did not happened like that.

Bridge on River Tochi was secured and when the remaining force moves forward it soon realised that it has been encircled. Thus half the force was on the northern side of the bridge and other half on the southern side. The rear guard action of southern force became uncontrolled melee. Their attempts and efforts to reach the bridge was foiled by the miscreants, in a panic they left the road and started travelling cross country in order to cross the Tochi River. PAF was called in for support.

The same very Hassu Khel Village again became notorious, the same place where a year and half ago a post was ransacked by the miscreants again became a battle field. Air Force was called upon which was wastage of efforts because there is nothing an aircraft can do in such close quarter battle which an attack helicopter cannot perform Three Cobras and two Bell 412 helicopters, one combat flight was employed. Own troops at the bridge also disengaged at 1545 hours thus leaving the remaining force at their own, miscreants also effectively checked any reinforcement coming from MirAli to the sight. The entire force was able to reach back MirAli in pockets with last one arriving at 0700 hours 8th October and last one being extricated at midnight 8/9th October 2007. 61 troops lost their lives and another 45 were injured. 7 Division later analysed the operation in which it reached the conclusion *‘notwithstanding the bravery of soldiers, there were incidents of non-adherence to minor tactics, especially to basic drills of rear guard action, taking up of hasty defence and use of ground...weak command and control especially at section and platoon level...withdrawal was completely disorganised which resulted into chaos and more casualties...pulse of locals could have been ascertained by intelligence agencies but this valuable input was lacking...*

²⁹¹ 7 Division War Diary, p – 20. Also see 7 Division Situation Report dated 7th October 2007.

*cost benefit analysis was ignored before launching the operation instead an over reactive approach was adopted leading to hasty planning for retrieval of a damage vehicle.*²⁹²

Four Kinetic strikes by Predator at 2153, 2217 and 0207 hours restored the notion of victory. On 8th October dead bodies of 45 soldiers were handed over by the locals and another 17 were handed over on 9th October. Same night three Kinetic strikes were conducted, two at Mausaki and one at Arkh Ghundai.

This operation brings back the memories and lessons of the Waziristan Campaign of 1922 and 1936. In both campaigns it was highlighted that regiments coming from the plains {Punjab} are ill-trained for Frontier Warfare, an acclimatisation period should be imposed upon them, separate training institutions and centres be established and above all the role of air is paramount. In 2007 despite having the superiority in air there seems to be shyness at staff level to incorporate the attack helicopters. The hard fact is that aviation assets never really came under the divisional control even for once. Aviation should have been able to extricate the whole force, no reinforcement was inducted in the area through helicopters, and Mi-17 helicopters were not even employed for any of the role

WATER AMBUSH

Water was responsible for maximum casualties of Tochi Scouts in the year. Tochi Scouts had a total of 12 fatalities in the year, Naik Syed Sadat Hussain Bangash embraced shahadat {30th March 2007} at Wana, he was part of Special Operations Group {SOG} which is a Frontier Corps special operations task force. One fatality occurred due to suicide attack at Boya, another took place at Saidgai due to ambush, one more occurred at Bakka Khel when Lance Naik Abdul Sattar Marwat who was driving the vehicle hit an IED on 12th November while he was moving with a convoy towards Bannu. Three died due to attacks on posts Lance Naik Yousaf Khan Bangash at Gharlamai was attacked on 29th September 2007, he had gone to the village to purchase some items and while coming back to the post was ambushed, he was hit with three bullets which he did not survive. Cook Sepoy Zarmat Khan Khattak and Sepoy Dildar Khan Orakzai were also with him and were wounded in this incident both had splinter injuries.

At Ismail Khel Post before it was attacked two fatalities took place due to water. On 24th July 2007 at 1755 hours Sepoy Nawaz Khattak and Sepoy {Animal Transport} Muhammad Hayat both embraced shahadat when their 'water party' after fulfilling the mission was proceeding back to the post and had an encounter with the miscreants who also suffered equal number of casualties.

At Machis Post on 30th July 2007 three scouts were killed when an IED was placed after careful reconnaissance by the miscreants for the water seeking party of Tochi Scouts. It was almost replica of what had happened at Banda almost a year ago. The strength of the party at both posts was also identical, one junior commissioned officer and two other ranks, both parties had gone not merely to collect the water but to take shower in the spring also. Naib Subedar Amir Akbar Yusafzai, Sepoy Hayat Khattak and Sepoy Nawaz Khattak lost their lives when an IED was exploded when all three of them were close to it.

²⁹² 7 Division War Diary, page – 24.

On 29th August 2007 an IED blast near water source {27 Brigade area} onto a joint army and Tochi Scouts patrol that had moved from Maltika Sar Post to fetch water, three were injured including two from Tochi scouts {Havildar Wahid Gul Afridi and Sepoy Rafiq Bhattani}.

The increasing number of water ambushes forced the military to replenish the post with QRF protecting water bowzers under attack helicopters cover²⁹³. On the last day of the month two water seeking parties one from army and other from Tochi Scouts were ambushed near the water source. Tochi Scouts were fired upon near Banda whereas army party was hit near Danai Post. Miscreants fired only solitary shots but in response over 14 rounds of artillery, 100 rounds of LMG, 82 rounds of G-3, four bombs of 60mm were expended by the military. Purely in terms of economics the cost of ammunition alone would have been sufficient to cater for any water requirement of these two posts for well over a year. Again at Machis on 15th November one soldier of 27 Sind Regiment was shot dead seven others were injured when they were busy in collecting water.

Datta Khel Post suffered one injury when on 3rd October 2007 a patrol moved from Akhtar –I Piquet to Datta Khel piquet to fetch water, they were engaged by miscreants in the Bazaar area, fire started and few shops in the bazaar caught fire, it stopped at 1355 hours with ten casualties of miscreants and own Havildar Noor Ullah Afridi getting one bullet on right leg, he was evacuated to MiranShah hospital by helicopter. Situation became tense as miscreants vowed to take revenge, the hard reality was that not all inhabitants of the area are miscreants but incidents like this only help in increasing the number of miscreant's sympathisers. The helicopter which came to evacuate Noor had to fire 400 rounds of LMG before it could pick him up. A jirga was called to diffuse the tension, announcements were made from mosques for peace and calm and compensation was made to the locals.²⁹⁴ But no lesson was learnt and again Akhtar Piquet {Datta Khel} No.1 Wing water party was fired upon on 19th October 2007, no loss took place this time but in retaliation 106mm RR and RPG-7 rockets were freely fired by the military.

Another water related attack took place on 5th October 2007 when the very bowzer carrying water for Tochi Scouts Posts at Machis, Pahari –II, & I while returning at 1305 hours had an IED blast, it destroyed the bowzer and both driver Lance Naik Fazal Amin Afridi and Sepoy Zar Manan Afridi received minor injuries. As punitive measures the nearby compound was demolished employing 128 soldiers. Next day as expected Machis Post received fire raid from 2220 hours till 2230 hours. Amin - II Post came under fire next day in which Sepoy Rehmat Khan received bullet injury on left shoulder and had to be evacuated to Bannu on a Bell 412. On 9th October this water fetching took two more army lives and eight other were injured when in 27 Brigade areas an army party was hit with IED. It is worth mentioning that Sepoy Faizullah Khattak who was driving the QRF vehicle had detected one IED while proceeding towards the Machis. Moral of the episode is that alertness pays.

Similar incidence of locating IED took place on 25th October 2007 when Sepoy Naseem Khattak being part of QRF, moving from MiranShah towards Bannu spotted a black

²⁹³ 7 Division Situation Report Dated 29th August 2007.

²⁹⁴ 7 Division Situation report dated 4th October 2007.

shalwar hanging from a tree four Kilometres ahead of Isha Post. Naseem was intelligent enough to understand that this is unusual and on his persistence the convoy stopped, area was searched and an IED located and diffused. Subedar Ismail Marwat was the QRF commander and he was the one who listened and agreed with Naseem's logic. A shell of 155 mm artillery was being utilised as the IED.

Sepoy Qadeer Jan Mohmand also detected one IED on 28th July 2007, he was performing the duty as light machine gunner in the leading vehicle. They were proceeding towards the Hussain Post carrying ration & water. Qadeer spotted one battery amidst the bushes; it was an anti-tank mine converted into an IED by the miscreants.

Sepoy Falak Niaz Mohmand on 2nd November 2007 destroyed one IED with a single shot of sniper rifle near Chashmai Bridge, he spotted it and in next moment blasted it. Same day in same convoy there was report of another IED planted on the route. Naik Rehan Turi was the one who spotted it being planted and covered amidst tree branches.

At Banda another water ambush took place on 30th November 2007 when No.4 Wing Tochi scouts were ambushed by miscreants resultantly Lance Naik Suleiman Afridi sustained injuries, in retaliation one miscreant was shot dead and four other were captured, the miscreants took the dead body away at night. It was not a successful ambush as Tochi Scouts were able to retaliate and inflict casualties upon the miscreants. The positive aspect of water collection was in the activity it generated among the posts. Water is life line and had to be obtained, thus water collection became an art of warfare. Miscreants were looking for an opportunity so were the Tochi Scouts to retaliate. The method adopted was to have a protection party of three Scouts and one soldier clearing the area and water collection party comprising of almost seven scouts then fulfilling the requirement.

Thus a series of fire raids was initiated against Banda Post in which on 1st December 2007 a night raid was carried out but it was repulsed. One drawback of such raids was the collateral damage that invariably took place due to artillery shells landing in the nearby villages. Army was no exception in such matters, on 7th August 2007 Lance Naik Dilbaz Khan of 11 Baloch died when an IED exploded while he was busy collecting water at Banda Post. On the same day Amin & Kalanjar- I water parties of Tochi Scouts were attacked and attack helicopters had to be employed for their safety.

By 2008 procedure remained the same but now water collection was carried out under the protection of QRFs.²⁹⁵ These quick reaction forces would carry the water and ration to all surrounding post including Pahari –I & II, it would take two hours to perform this task.

In 2009 there was another incident which seems to be a carbon copy of earlier accidents. On 10th August 2009 Havildar Rashid Ali Bangash and Sepoy Niaz Orakzai both embraced shahadat at Banda Post while they were preparing to take a dip in the cold water of the spring after filling their water containers, an IED exploded, and both had their last breath near the spring. But before this incident a warning was given when on 25th June 2009 at 0730 hours two shots were fired on the water carrying party. The party had gone down to the base to fetch the water through generator, in retaliation 11 rounds were fired by own troops on the

²⁹⁵ HQ Tochi Scouts Situation Report 23/2008 dated 12th January 2008.

individual who was able to make good his escape. Same event took place on 27th June when again the party was fired upon by a moving vehicle. Again on 26th June an individual fired a single round on the water party but in retaliation over 30 rounds of 14.5mm gun were expended. It became almost a plaything for the locals to fire one odd round and then run away but scouts had to follow a drill to retaliate which was costly.

By the summer of 2009 the situation improved slightly despite best efforts of all, still nine posts were dependent upon spring water and four on animal transport. Banda Post was lucky as it survived a narrow miss, on 15th July 2009 its water fetching body comprising of 15 scouts under the supervision of Captain Waqas the post commander detected an IED near the spring, they fired rounds on it to blast it and were successful, only Captain Waqas received minor splinters on head. Two days earlier Isha Post had similar episode and were able to detect and blast the IED. On 26th August 2009 another IED was detected, despite firing 45 rounds of LMG and 37 rounds of G-3 they could not explode it.

In 2011 two casualties were related to water, Lance Naik Inam Khan Yusufzai was drowned in the river at Dir on 10th July, it was a hot day and he had gone to the river to wash his clothes. No.2 Wing had recently arrived at the area. Inam decided to have a swim and was swept away forever. One casualty took place in order to make the life of others safe, Naib Subedar Zahir Shah Marwat was the post commander at Thall on Tochi, he was keen to have a water source for the piquet and in the process he embraced shahadat when the dug well equipment hit him {7th May 2011}.

Water Carrier Akbar Khan Wazir needs to be remembered because he was the first casualty related to water. He was abducted while he was performing the duty of water carrier at Bichi Post of No.2 Wing at Khajauri, his dead body was found later near Thall on Tochi.

POLITICAL FRONT

The political activities that underwent in the agency is interesting from historical perspective, in times when political agent was all powerful then he was responsible for all decisions and usually took the advice from the governor but now the chain of command became lengthy. Political Agent had to ask the GOC 7 Division who in turn would be relying upon the corps commander.

The opening move was made by the locals in August 2007 {11th} when an IED exploded on a 44 vehicle military convoy near Salai Village. Next day the mashrans and malaks communicated to the PA that they understand that this IED has been exploded by miscreants to implicate Bora Khel and Daur tribes. Next day Maulana Dindar also condemned this IED, this was the starting point. Daur felt that the Wazirs area is creating problems for them and as such a rift was created among them.

Army and political agent had a single point agenda that miscreants should announce unilateral & unconditional cease fire whereas the miscreants demanded withdrawal of army from the posts or stop its movement within the agency.

A number of jirga took place from October 2007 onwards. The Daur and Wazir rift became obvious with Daur alleging the Wazirs that sabotage activities are only taking place in Daur areas especially in lower Daur area. The main Daur so called Taliban leader was and

still is Maulana Sadiq Noor of Khatti Killi whereas the Wazir Taliban was and still is led by Hafiz Gul Bahadur with Haqqani sandwich in between.

Political agent NWA Mr Aurangzeb played a key role in mustering the lashkar of Dauris and encouraging them to forcibly evict the foreigners from the area he paid half a million in one instalment for such lashkar in December 2007. On 17th December 2007 Gul Bahadur unilaterally announced a cease fire for the coming back of hajjis and from this point onwards the opportunity was exploited by Major General Ghulam Dastgir GOC 7 Division.

Taliban demands were centred on removal of army and certain Tochi scouts check post with Banda Post topping the list, they also demanded release of all prisoners and compensation of losses, army demanded return of its stolen armoury and captured soldiers apart from banishing of foreigners. The ceasefire which was initially to expire on 8th January thus lingered on till 21st January 2008. Jirga returned two stolen RR's and army in return returned one double cabin pick up and four prisoners. Major General Ghulam Dastgir also gave 34 points demands.

On 21st January 2008 the final rounds of talks were held in which the Jirga finally gave a deadline for acceptance of all of the Taliban demands. It was led by Malak Qadir Khan, Malak Liaqat Ali Khan, Malak Inayat Khan and Maulvi Khan Daraz. As a compromise army agreed to allow the malaks to visit the post and readjust them, the posts under considerations were Boya, Dwa Toi, Michi Fort, Wacha Bibi, Damdil, and Dosalli. Razmak, Spinwam and Shewa. Corps Commander Lieutenant General Masood Aslam came on a visit next day and had a brief on the area. One is not certain of the outcome of all the talks but from now onwards the focus of fighting shifted to Razmak area which received almost 35 rockets on a single day {25th January 2008}.

Later on 26th January 2008 eight prisoners were released with a gift of one thousand rupees, one Holy Koran and one tasbeeh {rosary}; resultantly Taliban extended the ceasefire till 8th February 2008. It was a great political move as the operation in Razmak was still going on.

The pattern of discussion was that initially the PA or army intelligence would approach the groups who were having soft corner for the government, thus jirga was formed and this jirga would then negotiate with the Hafiz Gul Bahadur the Taliban leader who in turn would refer the demands to his own small group of jirga and a constant flow of agreements and disagreements would continue. Taliban Shura was different from the jirga, commandant Tochi Scouts Colonel Tariq Mahmud was part of all the process. Jirga was accepted as the mediator by the Taliban Shura but with condition that its decision should be based on riwaj but the state's draw back was that it could not accept the unilateral decision of the jirga, it insisted on further negotiations for which Taliban were not ready, this is the issue in nutshell. On 17th February 2008 the peace pact was finally signed rather agreed in a grand jirga in which over 200 members including Malak Qadir Khan Wazir, Khan Draz Wazir, Malak Shahzada Wazir, Ajmal khan Wazir took part, from state Commandant Tochi Scouts, GOC 7 Division, PA NWA and few others attended and gave consent.

This peace pact is relic of one fact that peace in North Waziristan Agency cannot be maintained or attained without active involvement of Wazirs and political administration. With the peace agreement the administration of the agency was practically taken over by the Taliban. On 21st February 2008 these Taliban formulated the policy under which transportation of flour to Afghanistan was banned, all compact discs shops were closed and above all any one kidnapping or threatening the army or Frontier Corps along with any official will be taken to the task. These announcements were made through pamphlets and loudspeakers on behalf of Hafiz Gul Bahadur and Maulvi Sadiq Noor.

On 18th March 2008 another jirga was held at 1230 hours in which all the leading malaks and officials attended less GOC 7 Division who later met the jirga at 1415 hours and congratulated them and the entire nation on the safe passage of one month of peace agreement. He lauded the efforts of jirga for curbing smuggling in the agency; he agreed that no army or Frontier Corps units will check any vehicle at any check post unless there is a dire requirement. The conduct of jirga has changed in over the years, initially it was either called by the political agent on a schedule or in emergency or when a high official was visiting the agency but seldom a jirga had to wait for hours for any person who is present in MiranShah. The malaks as noted by a political agent in 1920 are highly sensitive about protocol.

In South Waziristan Agency the peace process started on 14th May 2008 when army and Taliban released each other's prisoners, army released 37 Taliban and in lieu got its 12 members including one captain; six more soldiers were released on 15th May.

The last day of year 2007 passed away peacefully.

2008 - LIFE AFTER THE PEACE AGREEMENT

The life in agency after the peace agreement became peaceful with matters other than the military taking precedence. Tochi scouts did not had any casualty in the year within the agency. There were two scouts who embraced shahadat, Havildar Salim Khan Orakzai who was kidnapped by the miscreants on 22nd December 2008 near Kohat while he was coming back from leave, his dead body was later handed over to the political administration by the miscreants and he was buried with the Scouts dignity and rites. Sepoy Gultan Khan Afridi was unlucky as he was hit with own aircraft stray bullet at Khyber Agency on the last day of the year 2008. It was only in mid June 2009 that next fatality took place in the agency. Luckily there were only six injuries to the scouts in the year 2008 out of which only two occurred in the NWA, two at Hangu and rest in Bara and Dara.

Taliban now took the control of the area, every day someone was caught in smuggling or firing or theft. Men suspicious of working for India were handed over to the army. They on 8th March 2008 warned the officials of radio MiranShah to close down as in their view it was working on foreign agenda and threatening the values of the locals.

The smuggling or movement of flour and other edibles to Afghanistan had been a sensitive issue for over a century. One point is that free trade corridor be given as in Europe and other favours strict control of such items. In NWA the issue becomes even more delicate

as tribes are living on both side of the border. Daur generally favours strict movement control and Wazir are in favour of free access. On 17th April 2008 Hafiz Gul Bahadur addressed a gathering of Taliban commanders at Idak and warned that any one stopping the flour movement will be dealt with; his face will be blackened and given a tour of the area on a donkey. Flour price at MiranShah was Rupees 1700 for a bag of 100 kilograms

The crimes in the agency continued as before there were murders, kidnapping, looting firing and theft but now with Khassadars and Taliban it were being chased. On 19th April 2008 three men were shot publicly on charges of adultery and murder

There were splinter groups working in the agency, there were old enmities like the one between Tabiwal Wazir and MiranShah Daur, they both again clash on 24th February 2008. Abdul Khaliq and Jabbari groups also try to create a mischief by planting dummy explosives at Dardoni Check Post which destroyed the water tank. National Bank at MirAli was opened on the assurance of local Taliban taking the surety. There was no set day for the move of military convoy but one of the conditions of the Taliban was that army should fix one particular day for road movement as it causes inconvenience to the public. On 31st March 2008 political administration started working again in Razmak, the issue of Razmak Cadet College was still under consideration as the college was moved from here at end 2007. Now the tribes were requesting for its reopening but government wanted a written assurance from them for the safety which was not coming forward. On 2nd April 2008 it was announced that college will be reopened, resultantly 61 Punjab Regiment which was occupying the premises started shifting to the Razmak Camp. College was finally opened on 24th August 2008 but it was again closed after a short period.

There was a monthly meeting between the officials and the jirga held at the circuit house MiranShah. Issues were minor but nevertheless raised, that is one disadvantage of having meetings because something has to be said, in the April meeting the point raised by the army was that the sale of compact discs banned by the Taliban is not part of the peace agreement, another point was that one vehicle carrying cement was stopped by the Taliban for four hours. The drawback of these minor points was that the jirga now had to communicate all these to the Taliban Shura and then come back to the army circles thus the air of mistrust started creeping up with both sides making mountains out of moles. From the Taliban Shura the points conveyed were regarding the issue of Khassadars pay and the distribution of flour bags. With the passage of times the air became cordial among the negotiators and atmosphere also friendly.

It was the Khassadars pay which ultimately set the course of collision among the various stake holders of the agency. At end April Khassadars went on strike later they took over the post and with this the jirga also reminded the state that that it was part of the peace pact to pay the Khassadars pending pay. The issue looks minor with Khassadars demanding seven months of pay and PA willing to pay only four months as balance was beyond his financial ceilings. Regarding CD's shops they were demolished by Taliban in MiranShah on 3/4th June 2008, a total of 12 shops were destroyed. Shaving of beard was banned and any barber caught doing so will be punished same was the case for drug sellers and consumers.

PROTECTION WALLS-2008

Protection wall on MiranShah strip started in January 2008 and by 12th January 168 feet of wall was completed having a height of two feet. 15 more feet were added to the wall length within next three days and by 24th January the overall length increased to 224 Feet by height was decreased to one and half feet.. Other posts including Faqiran Killi, Dewgar, Sassa, Girit, Saidgai, Naridag, Danai and Tanghrai also started erecting mud walls around them, each having wall height of four feet , length differed from post to post. By 9th March 2008 half of these protective walls were completed, Danai – I was the first post to complete it.

VEHICLE CHECKING

Another task performed daily was the checking of vehicles moving between Pakistan & Afghanistan. The check posts at Ghulam Khan, Charkhi Nullah and Alwara –II were the borer check posts while Dardoni –II and Boya Bridge were the rear check posts. In winter on an average 35 heavy and 60 light vehicles moved daily between these two countries

AGENCY HEADQUARTERS OPERATION 22 JANUARY 2008.

With the onset of operation in the South Waziristan Agency the miscreants who were hit now looked upon Agency Headquarters MiranShah for medical treatment. At 2245 hours on 2245 hours the Major Moazzam Cheema the intelligence officer of Tochi Scouts was busy in the mess library when his informer came and whispered some news. Tochi Scouts intelligence network were able to achieve a breakthrough, the all important information about the arrival of miscreants from Ladha. Cheema immediately walked towards the commandant's house and informed him about this and also gave the outline plan. There is no time to get in touch with army, any delay or involvement of staff work will hamper the success of the mission, informer is reliable and Cheema himself volunteered to carry on and lead the mission. Commandant Tochi Scouts Colonel Tariq Mahmud was looking for such opportunity, the hospital is within a stone throw from the stadium check post, he was reluctant in carrying out this operation all by himself, in case it fires back then he will be taken to the task but in the end he gave go ahead and also got ready to monitor it from his office. Colonel Tariq did inform the army and convinced them of its success, one quick Reaction Force of 1st FF was made available at MiranShah main gate for any emergency.

At 0145 hours the Chigha Party of Tochi Scouts comprising of 36 scouts, four JCO's left the Fort on foot, Mr Amanullah the Tehsildar of MiranShah was also taken on board.

Chigha Party had a plan, the lone miscreant sentry at the main gate had to be disposed off quietly before he alerts anyone else in the neighbourhood and above all the whole mission had to complete before the arrival of any reinforcement for the miscreants which was bound to come.

Deception was adopted, with Havildar Ijaz Yusafzai pretending to be a patient and suddenly overpowering the miscreant guard, Ijaz Yusafzai took his SMG and three loaded magazines.

At 0150 hours the Chigha Party entered the hospital from the southern gate, divided itself into groups, one group of scouts led by Naib Subedar Sharbat Khan Khattak rushed to the Surgical Ward but there was no patient, other group under Subedar Nadir Shah Bhattani had gone to the Emergency Ward but there was nothing there too. Major Cheema now started having second thoughts about the reliability of his informers, he intelligently checked the private patients register and there the names of ten patients were registered an hour ago.

The layout of hospital is colonial in style with separate wards spread over the area, high trees, and shrubs blocking the observation, half broken pavements linking the various wards. They managed to locate the private ward and ten miscreants were arrested without firing of any round.

ELECTION DAY 18TH FEBRUARY 2008

Tochi Scouts had been ensuring free and fair elections in the agency whenever they are held, on this day flag march was conducted by the Tochi scouts, all troops earmarked for polling duties reached their location by 0700 hours and were back by 1300 hours, no untoward incident took place. Out of twenty candidates contesting the election on National assembly seat No.40 {tribal area No.5} only five were Wazir and rest all were Daur. On 30th December 2007 a pamphlet was distributed in the area in which democracy was lamented and people were threatened not to visit polling stations. On 18th February 2008 polling was held peacefully, out of a total 35214 registered voters only 43% casted their votes; Kamran Khan Madda Khel Wazir bagged 5883 votes while Engineer Abdul Qayyum got 5441 votes.

24TH FEBRUARY 2008 ATTACK ON STADIUM CHECK POST

On 18th February MiranShah was again subject to missile attacks, five missiles {probably 107 mm} were fired from the WNW of Tablighi Markaz, slight damage to one of the barrack was the only effect they achieved.

Gul Badshah age fifteen was the younger brother of a Taliban commander Eid Niaz who took an active part in the attack on the Hassu Khel Post in 2006, he died there due to bullet wounds. At 1615 hours on 24th February Gul Badshah walked towards the stadium at the edge of the Fort where a post of Tochi Scouts was established, he put his hands in the jacket and took out a hand grenade. Havildar Lal Zeb Khattak and Sepoy Sial Badshah Afridi were on duty, in fact Lal Zeb had just came to help Sial in checking of the people who were returning back to the colony after a day's work in the city. Lance Naik Hikmat Afridi was also present at the site, while other two were busy in talking he was immersed in scanning the people who were moving around on the around, it was he who first detected Gul Badshah's abnormal behaviour, as he approached the check post, he raised his rifle and it took micro seconds in which Gul put his hands in the jacket and took out the grenade and at that precise

moment Hikmat's bullet ripped through his body ; the grenade blew and its splinters hit Lal Zeb and Sial but both survived²⁹⁶. One good sentry who is alert can stave off a disaster.

AMIN II POST CLOSED

There were many posts which were closed down with the onset of winter starting from November 2007. Dadum, Latka **Narai,Kharsin**, Shinkai, Girgit, **Sherranum**, Red Hut, **Mantakai** Sar, Ismail Khel, Kind Sar, Mammon Panga, Tanghrai, Dardon III, Saidgi,Faqiran, Dande, Girgit No.2 was closed down in end 2007, few of them were handed over to army as well. On 15th April 2008 Acting Commandant Tochi Scouts Lieutenant Colonel Imran had a jirga with the Darpa Khel, Datta Khel Bora Khel Wazir and announced the closing down of Amin Post No.2 with a hope that now the locals will protect their own areas, on 16th April 2008 at 1600 hours it was closed down. Another nostalgic post which was closed down was the British Cemetery Post which had last sentry duty from No.1 Wing Tochi Scouts on 17th January 2008.

Operation Rah-e-Najaat 24th October 2009

Tochi scouts did not take part in Operation Rahe-e- Najaat yet in the overall context of North Waziristan Agency this operation is of vital importance. It was conducted by 326 Brigade which was inducted in the NWA {7 Division} in May 2009. Tanks were used at an altitude of 6500-8000 feet. No go areas around Razmak were cleared and most important notion of victory was taken back from the miscreants and their myth of invincibility was shattered. Operation aimed at Makin, which is hub among Razmak-Ladha- Sararogha. All these names and places carry bitter memories for army and Frontier Corps {Tochi Scouts being no exception}. The operation itself had started in the first week of October when 22 sorties of PAF were utilised on 6th October in Nawaz Kot, Kundi Sar & Karam

END OF DECADE

2010 marked the end of first decade of new millennium, not much of difference from the preceding decade of 1900-1910. It also signalled the five years marker of joint operations with 7 Infantry Division. Hundred years ago the tempo of violence was picked in the second decade which also witnessed the First Great War and Third Afghan War, in retrospect Tochi Scouts are fighting the Fifth Afghan War now. Fundamentals of Afghan Wars have retained their basic ingredients which circles around excellent marksmanship, high standard of physical fitness, use of ground, deception, treachery and above all ruthless treatment of enemy.

There was no letting down of the guard on behalf of military, every day there was some incident at some part of the NWA. Bannu Serai was fortunate to survive an attempted suicide attack on 23rd December 2009. It was again the sentry on the spot which saved the day and prevented an apocalypse. One Toyota Surf laden with explosives attempted to hit the

²⁹⁶ HQ Tochi Scouts Situation Report 110/2008, Dated 24th February 2008.

Bannu Serai of Tochi Scouts, sentry on duty challenged the vehicle and fired initially in the air then hit the tyres. Vehicle overturned but miscreants were able to escape. Serai is a traditional Persian name for a resting place, English language does not have any proper word to convey the spirit of a Serai. It is not a transit camp, neither motel nor a guest house. Scouts going or coming from leave towards MiranShah invariably have to spend a night or two here. This Serai was hit again in 2011 and this time miscreants were able to full fill their evil designs. On 24th December 2011 a suicide vehicle was the cause of four scouts embracing shahadat, namely Lance Naik Alamgir Khan Khattak, Sepoy Ghafoor Ali Orakzai, Sher Madullah Wazir and Taj Muhammad Mohmand. Tochi Serai was shifted from its old place to a new place inside the cantonment. Old Serai was established in mid-eighties after a lot of paper work the land was purchased but it not secured under the present circumstances.

2010 - MACHIS VILLAGE

Machis is a small village on the east of MiranShah the original name is after the Match Factory which was established in early seventies, like most of the names it was also given the local colour thus match factory area became Machis. For unknown reasons it has become a hub of foreign fighting elements living in North Waziristan Agency. One cannot say with authenticity that all foreigners are terrorists or miscreants but as a thumb rule they all are classified as such. The conduct of the foreigners over a period of time has become unbecoming, they support people who are involved in anti-state activities by giving them harbour, shelter and physical support.

Own intelligence agencies and political administration has strong reasons to believe that no permanent peace in the city can be attained or maintained as long as these foreign fighting elements are present. On 22 January 2010 a search operation was conducted in the village with the help of political administration, 22 Brigade, SSG and Tochi Scouts. Aim was to flush out the foreign terrorists, establish the writ of government and to give strong message to the locals. 15 miscreants were killed and another 70 were arrested.

January of 2010 started with a promise of peace but these hopes were short lived as on 23rd January 2010 at 0300 hours four rockets of RPG-7 landed inside or near the fort without causing any damage; it was more or less a reaction of Machis Village search operation. Next day same pattern was repeated with five rockets landing inside the fort, one rocket landed near the school, one near the grid station, one landed inside the political agent's colony. Two more such attacks were launched on 30th & 31st January with same results; no damage was caused. It was in mid-February that 7 Division passed the instructions to all under command highlighting that level of violence has increased in last one week there by urging all levels to remain cognizant of effete environment. In 2009 alone 54 people were killed by the Taliban in the NWA on the charges of spying.²⁹⁷

FEBRUARY 2010

MiranShah Garrison was hit again with missiles on 19/20 February 2010 at 0150 hours. Next morning the civilians informed Pahari –I Post about few more missiles lying

²⁹⁷ Political Agent North Waziristan Agency, letter No. Intelligence/NWA/2 dated 4 March 2010.

close by. A fighting patrol under Lieutenant Colonel Khalid wing Commander No.6 Wing along with bomb disposal party of 8 Engineers Battalion and representatives of 83 Ordnance Battalion searched the area {Village Gul Rauf in Tol Khel} and found four missiles inside a mosque, they all were blasted outside the mosque and villagers warned.

RULE OF ENGAGEMENTS

In May 2010 Pakistan Army modified its rule of engagements on the Western borders. There already existed a General Staff Publication subject on the subject but it was not comprehensive to deal with the volatile situation. The best part of these rules of engagements was that it laid great emphasis on avoiding collateral damage, observance of local customs, traditions, Riwaj and tribal culture. It admitted that distinguishing a miscreant from a civilian is a herculean task.

4TH JULY 2010

Just a day short of fifth year of being part of 7 Division in war against terror, Tochi Scouts' Sargardan Post killed a top ranking Taliban commander Mazloom Yar. It was a road operating day and there were intelligence reports and communication intercepts which indicated presence of a high level miscreant commander in the area. At 0915 hours the piquet party at Sargardan Post observed a bearded middle age man walking, the man pretended to be a lunatic. Subedar Shafi Bhittani took no chance and fired a shot in the air, the lunatic man immediately changed his stance and took out a sub machine gun from under his clothes and opened fire on the scouts and trying to flee the spot. His shots hit Sepoy Shadi Khan Marwat but scouts fire almost mow him down before he was able to cross the road. Later during search it was confirmed that he is Mazloom Yar belonging to Bait Ullah Mahsud group having a head money worth Rupees 20 million

No.1 Wing Tochi Scouts.

No 1 Wing in June 2011 was ordered to move to Dir , where it was placed under command Dir Scouts, the aim was to beef up the internal security of the area and to curb the infiltration of the Taliban and Afghan insurgents into own area. It was 14th June 2011 when one half of the wing's strength was moved to Timergarh, they left MiranShah at 1000 hours, and there was no curfew in the city. Naib Subedar Sher Alam wanted to see off his friend Naib Subedar Muslim Khan Wazir at the colony gate but when he reached there the convoy had already left. Commandant Colonel Amir Akbar was present at the spot to have a last word with his scouts.

Dir have a history of insurgency, in the meanwhile the successful operation Sher Dil had almost culminated in the adjoining Swat State thus it was vital that no resurgence should be allowed to take place. Lieutenant Colonel Qaiser of 52 Cavalry took over the command of the wing on the eve of move. The Wing reported at Dir Scouts after a successful road move of almost 500 miles. The very first incident took place on 4th July 2011 when a Scout Niazat while taking bath in the Panjkora River was drowned to death, he was rather playing in the water when a wave took him astride and instantly his head was smashed into a boulder and he

vanished, his dead body was found after a lapse of three days; not a very good omen for the start of the command and operation.

Dir

Dir has an average elevation of 2000 – 3700 meters, the major tribes are Gujjar, Wardak, Swati, Roghani, Katani, Mashmani and Shinwari. The major Talib leader was Latif alias Yasir of Village Chiragh Ali. Mutabbar Khan was another chieftain having a lashkar of over 1000 under his control.

Wing was initially placed under command Dir Scouts and it was only in September that it came under command 105 Brigade as part of 19 Division. The initial task was to maintain a close watch on the

On 30th July and 1st August 2011 the Wing carried out two search and cordon operations in the area, in the first operation 45 scouts of No 1 Wing in collaboration with 33 Baluch Regiment conducted the operation in Village Loi Kandao between 1000 – 1500 hours in which not much was confiscated, major weapons that were seized included two heavy machine guns and two small machine guns. In the second operations the booty was much bigger, it was conducted in the Village Ayagai Gharbi between 1630 – 2310 hours, 30 scouts of No 1 Wing along with 33 Baluch Regiment and local police including female personals carried out this task. The general pattern was that scouts cordoned off the area at a distance of 300 meters and regular army at 200 meters there by allowing local police and political administration to individually search each house. Five SMGs, one HMG and one Recoilless Rifle along with Thuraya communication set were confiscated.

From August onwards the deployment of the wing was spread , the headquarters were established at Chauktian having a strength of 145 Scouts, 14 scouts at Tariq Observation Post, 31 scouts at Siar Amin Post and another 110 scouts at Nawa Killi pass base and at Zakhana Killi and finally 137 scouts were placed at Shingara, Attan and Shahi. 16 Azad Kashmir Regiment was also incorporated into the operations and there few posts which were jointly managed and rest were responsibilities of either scouts or the regular army. The scouts were not at the top rather they were at the bases of passes checking the influx of people. No 1 Wing from August onwards came under command of 105 Brigade which was part of 19 Infantry Division commanded by Major General Ramday, in an interview General Ramday highlighted his plans which revolved around closing the passes and not allowing the miscreants inside the valley either to escape or to get reinforcement from Afghanistan thus control of passes was vital. Later the General received a bullet in his thigh while carrying out aerial reconnaissance in the area. Chauktian the base is ahead of Timergarh where the headquarters of Dir Scouts is placed , a road leads towards the Chauktian and from there various tracks leads to passes which starting from north are Dobando Dara where an independent post of No 1 Wing was established, on the left of this pass is Anwaar Darra then further left is Shingar, then Bin Darra and Nusrat Darra.

Not much of activity was faced by the wing, administratively the supply of water was abundance. Sepoy Aiyan have a service of three years and according to him the life was not as difficult as it was in Datta Khel, the area is beautiful and overall it was easy to keep an eye

on the passes. Our duty was to check the people and to defend ourselves in case of an attack by the Taliban, no such attack came however a detachment of 16 Azad Kashmir came under fire rather it was ambushed in which own scouts later played key role in evacuation of the casualties and warning others of impending danger. Naik Bismillah spotted the miscreants firing upon the soldiers of 16 Azad Kashmir Regiment and he opened up with his 12.7mm gun, Lance Naik Falak Taj a signaller of the wing promptly informed the regimental headquarters about the ongoing ambush. Both were later praised by the battalion commander of the ambushed platoon.

Kurram Agency

In the first week of October 2011 the Wing received orders to move to Kurram Agency for an impending operation, subsequently the advance party reached Thall on 15th October and main body after two days of refurbishment and coordination at Bala Hisar also arrived at Thall on 16th and later moved to Sadda on 17th October 2011. Wing commander Lieutenant Colonel Qaiser carried out all the necessary coordination with HQFC at Peshawar and he acknowledges their support.

The operation was planned in Central Kurram Valley. Intended area of operation does not have any physical boundary with Afghanistan rather it is bounded on the north by Kurram {Parachinar} on the south by the Tirah or Khyber Agency in the east by the Upper Kurram and in the west by the lower Kurram {Arawali-Thall} area. The major tribe within the valley are Masuzai and Mamuzai both are sub tribes of Orakzai thus the valley or the operation are known as 'Mamuzai Operation'. There is a metallic road which leads to Parachinar from Kohat, there used to be a narrow gauge railway track which was service able during the Russian invasion of Afghanistan, this track terminates at Thall Fort but with the passage of years it became unserviceable and now only few remaining portions of the railways are visible. Thall Fort which stands out on a high ground is one of the most impressive fort in the area it was constructed in 1932 along with Razmak. It guards the lower Kurram Valley, all along the Kurram river flows with the road and provides a refreshing scenery, valley is wide and fertile. Thall is now the headquarters of Thall Scouts which were raised in 1948 and also housed one infantry brigade apart from the Combined Military Hospital. From Thall after a distance of ten miles comes the Arawali Fort another major and impressive fort being under the use of Kurram Militia and after few small towns comes the Sadda which is a tehsil, it is at this point that a road leads towards the west into the Mamuzai Valley.

Mamuzai Valley

Mamuzai Valley is wide and fertile, initially after a small blocking it opens up and follows the Khamzuzai Nullah for another twenty miles when a junction is reached {Dwa Toi} here another nullah join in and as such divides the valley into halves, a bridge known as Sultani Bridge allows the vehicular movement to drift on the western side of the nullah. A stony track with constant climb and narrow turns passes along the villages and terminates at Tabbi Khili where a post of Kurram Militia was located, ahead is the village of Daggar which before the operation was a flourishing arms market and ahead of the Daggar after a kilometre is the Dappa Pass which allows the foot and jeep movement into the Khyber or Tirah Valley onwards into Afghanistan. On the other side of the valley from Sultani Bridge onwards on the

eastern bank the track is shingle and it leads to the villages of Jogi and Dabgrai both were strongholds of Taliban before the operations. From July 2011 onwards the whole Mamuzai Valley became almost inaccessible for own troops and Taliban started strengthening their positions. They ideologically influenced the people, threatened them, took away the money and almost made the locals hostages to their whims. Another aspect of this incursion was the increased sectarian tension in the complete of Kurram Valley. Lower Kurram is Sunni by faith with pockets of Shia faith. The people of Mamuzai Valley are Sunni by faith peaceful in nature, with the advent of Taliban the sectarian differences were given added colour. The Orakzai Tribe especially in Mamuzai Valley are not militant in nature, education level is rather high as compared to Tochi Valley. In the morning, valley especially the Tabbi Killi is full of children chattering or repeating their lessons intermingled with occasional burst of laughter. At noon the track is full of these boys coming from government run school wearing black militia kameez shalwar and black peak cap with a red badge, these students normally travels three or four miles one way to gain and attend school. The girls also attend school, the overall outlook of the valley is modern and progressive. The women observes purdah but yet they work in fields. Construction of the houses is also different from Tochi Valley, here the houses are in longitudinal in nature, with roofs almost joining each other, and they are compact in nature, made of stones and wood. Quite a number of male in the valley are working abroad thus signs of prosperity are visible in the form of their houses having iron gates adorned with paint. Weather is moderate, it is warm in summer and in winter the temperature drops below zero with bouts of snow fall in the first week of January or end of it which covers the complete valley making any vehicular traffic almost non-existent. The valley is not entirely flat rather it has low level mounds on which the villages are made, the surface is rough and stony but in the fields astride the Nullah the area is flat and fertile and gives an almost picturesque view. The valley can be at best compares with the Gilgit and Skardu area with Tabbi Killi almost resembling Shigar Valley.

Preparation

No.1 Wing's advance party moved to Thall on Kurram on 22nd October. Lieutenant Qaiser now had one more commissioned officer Captain Asad, in Dir he was all alone but junior commissioned officers of Tochi Scouts are highly competent.

On 25th October at Sadda the very first operational briefing was carried out. IGFC Major General Nadir Zeb personally came and had a talk with officers apart from holding a Durbar. Corps Commander 11Corps Lieutenant General Asif Yasin also came to raise the morale of the troops. No.1 Wing was put under command 73 Brigade along with 42 Punjab and 16 Frontier Force Regiments. Light Commando Battalions is a new concept introduced in army under which every corps is allotted one such battalion, in this operation Northern Light Infantry Commando Battalion was also taking part. Objective given to No.1 Wing Tochi Scouts was to clear the Cheelosar Feature. 14th November 2011 was the D-Day.

Thus these twenty odd days were well utilised by Lieutenant Qaiser for the training of his wing for the impending operation. Extensive firing and field craft were practiced, small sections and units were formed as mountainous terrain restricts use of classical taught organisation. Lieutenant Islam was another officer who was posted to the wing.

Cheelosar Feature

At the end of Mamuzai Valley is Cheelosar feature, an imposing mountain of 8000 feet which acts like a patriarch of the valley. It dominates not only this vale but also Tirah {Maidan} and Orakzai Agency. There is one prominent pass known as Dabba Pass which allows foot movement from Kurram Valley to Tirah Valley onwards to Afghanistan. The track which starts from Sadda and terminates at Daggar Village is the base of Cheelosar Feature; in fact the feature is mile ahead of village across the small river.

No.1 Wing from first week of November 2011 started preparing administratively for the incoming operation. Kurram militia had one post at the Daggar Village; rather short of it known as Three Pimples. No.1 Wing was handed over this post to establish its headquarters, few more house from the locals were taken over on rent, signal headquarters were established and importantly all ten mules were transported from Sadda to Three Pimples.

Natives were helpful and no incidence of IED or ambush took place during this phase of operation. On 14th November as per plan 16 FF cleared the area but Cheelosar Feature remained under miscreants' control. On the evening of 15th November, Lieutenant Colonel Qaiser had the biggest test of his military career to capture the feature. Qaiser's plan was simple , he assigned the task to A Company , divided them into two groups, one group to move at last light , trek through the mountainous terrain in darkness, cross the small river and establish a base of fire and gives signal for success. Basing upon this signal next group to move forward and joins the first group. Later both groups to climb to the top leaving only mortars at the base. Plan looks simple but the hard part was that there was no authentic intelligence information about the actual strength of miscreants at the top.

First group under Naib Subedar Wahid Mir with one platoon marched off at last light and when the signal of their safe arrival at the base was received that was the time when Qaiser had his first sigh of relief. He was controlling the operation from the command post which he had established at a vantage point on the three pimples, he could observe the scouts through night vision devices.

Lieutenant Islam led the second group which set off at 2230 hours and joined the first group at 0030 hours. Now the real and hard part of the operation commences. Qaiser had ensured that every scout is well armed, each was carrying four spare magazines, meal ready to eat {MRE} it was a novelty for the scouts, dry fruit, and traditional Gur & Channa.; ample water in water bottles. There was nothing new in all this equipment, same was carried in traditional gasht also but drastic changes in uniform & web equipment had made all this a complex affair.

At 0100 hours the A Company started climbing, a track leads to the top but tactically it was not viable to follow it due to fear of mines and miscreants fire. Mountain had very little to help, rugged stones, bushes, slippery ground, night, fear of unknown all combined together makes any climb. Keeping direction was the biggest challenge and everything depends upon it. There have been instances in military history where a force had been circling around and around all night. The leading scouts had the task to act as markers, there was no question of having any kind of light neither any sound was permissible thus whispers and sound training was the key to successfully reach the top.

Few slipped and were helped by other scouts, two had severe ankle sprains. Company was not going up in a straight line rather every scout was making his own way up forward. Move was tactical in nature with one platoon moving up and then covering the climb of second and then third platoon moving; a scene similar to Iblanke ridge.

When the first scout reached the left shoulder of the Cheelosar, he scanned the area in darkness, there was no sign of any fire, within minutes the whole platoon was at the shoulder and then they just rush forward and got themselves deployed almost hundred feet ahead. Second and third platoons followed and success signal was given; it was premature.

With first light they came under sporadic but accurate sniper fire from the high ground. Top was not flat rather it had plenty of cover in the form of thick trees and broken ground. No.2 Platoon move forward from the right and No.1 Platoon from the left with the No.3 Platoon providing fire base. They creep forward and then just charge on the suspected miscreant firing bay. They found half cooked food and some utensils apart from cartridges of fired rounds.

By mid-morning it was clear to Qaiser that he has achieved a half victory, as long as he does not clear physically the complete Cheelosar Feature his troops will remain in perpetual fear of a sniper. Already one scout was wounded from the enemy fire, Sepoy Naseeb Wazir was hit with a bullet in his right thigh.

By evening, Qaiser started pounding the right shoulder of the feature with artillery, firing 29 rounds and another 31 rounds on the top of the feature, he now ordered his scouts to capture the top and then move towards the right. Meantime the first mule train carrying ration and more importantly ammunition including 12.7mm gun had set off from the command headquarters. It dumped the goods at the base camp which was further secured with another platoon which also carried these items to the top, line of communication was now secured.

By mid night 17th November 2011 top of Cheelosar feature was with the wing and next day in a systematic manner they descended down towards the right shoulder and whole of Cheelosar Feature was cleared and posts established.

Lieutenant Islam Shahzad led by personal example, he stayed over two months at the crest and through his energetic , hardy and cheerful personality created a sense of security among his under command. Islam came directly from Pakistan Military Academy, he is from the first batch of cadets who have been given short commission from the branch. This concept is the brain child of Chief of army Staff General Kayani and Lieutenant Islam through his deeds and acts have validated his Chief's idea.

25th November 2011

On this day the wing came under heavy attack by the miscreants. Wing had a strength of 359 scouts who were deployed, strength of companies varied depending upon the location. A Company had eighty, B Company had sixty three, C Company had only forty four and D Company had 128 scouts with another 44 being part of the command post. A rear headquarter was maintained at Sadda in a government college. On Cheelosar alone there were eight posts namely Dappa Top, Flag Group, Islam Mir Top, Afraz Top and Asad Post, last one acted as company command post as well. On the left of Cheelosar Feature, river separated it from

other features, the adjoining feature known as Takht Sar was under control of C Company which had four posts, it now dominated the Daggar Bazaar; at the base of Takht Sar two nullahs joins in and forms the river. On the right of Cheelosar Feature a track and open fields created a gap in which Tari, Barmela villages are at the near end and Dargai and Samo Killi villages are at the far end. This track acts as an intercompany boundary also. On the southern edge of this track which is in fact the right of Cheelosar feature another high ground known as Ghakhai Feature was occupied by the B Company with four posts. D Company lies further east of this feature with another riverine creating a gap. Fire base of the wing was established in this company.

In plain areas this might have created no major issue but in a mountainous terrain with hostile local population the maintenance of these wide spread company locations is a logistic night mare. First major issue was the establishing of communication network among all the posts, second to logistically keep them updated. Lieutenant Colonel Qaiser initially established a central cook house from where fresh food was daily provided to all the posts. It had its merits and demerits. On the lighter side the very scouts assigned to this task would have the pick of meat enroute thus independent cook houses were established. Initially the major and most important aspect of the whole command echelon was this task; and they rose to the occasion. Every scout available performed this duty of ferrying fresh and dry ration to the posts. All posts were linked with communication network enabling deployed scouts to have occasional talk with his family. Leave was another issue, wing had been deployed for long and leave was restricted for last almost six months. I initially started sending men in small groups, without informing the posts regarding my intention, once the men reported at the headquarters they were given leave pass and transported away to the Sadda, but not for long this secret was kept from the others. Soon an influx of applications and petitions started flowing, they were right in their own perspective but somehow I managed it; recalled the wing commander.

Army units after clearing the area move ahead and maintenance of peace and mopping up was entrusted to the No.1 Wing Tochi Scouts. One village remained a thorn in the overall success of the operation it was Sammo Killi. On 25th November 2011, wing performed another task, recovery of a toppled tank, it had gone down the track while moving forward. Qaiser himself from cavalry supervised this recovery operation, tank got toppled at 1630 hours, soon it was darkness but wing successfully retrieved the tank.

SAMMO KILLI

From 27th November 2011 area domination started towards Sammo Killi, Qaiser himself took out the QRF and established a new post short of village on the track Daggar – Sammo Killi. It was this post which later came under heavy miscreants attack, wing retaliated with 2298 rounds of G-3, 300 rounds of SMG, 2128 rounds of light machine gun and 111 rounds of 12.7 mm gun. Importance of post can be visualised from its ammunition expenditure on 29th November over 1300 rounds of G-3 were fired in protection along with 1255 rounds of LMG.

Post itself is located on the right side of the broken hilly track while moving towards the Sammo Killi. To reach Sammo Killi wing has to cross a seasonal nullah which starts climbing after crossing, then passes through three likely ambush sites, the width of the track is hardly good enough for a single vehicle, one has to use low gears all the way up. Post itself is at the hump, thus it provides excellent observation and firing position. Miscreants also knew the importance of this post, as long as it stays intact their movement was restricted and curbed thus they were adamant to eradicate it by raid or ambush. Area is green with trees providing cover to infiltrators, long logistic trail was another **Achilles Heel**. Like other posts it is mud made with thick vegetation on one side. Initially post was provided fresh food daily but then the vehicles were ambushed therefore independent cook house was established. It has its own merits and demerits. On 30th November one tank was also placed at the post. This tank certainly shifted the balance of power in the arena, miscreants knew that as long as this piece of iron is standing next to post their chances of gaining any respite diminishes with the hour thus post acme under more stern fire arid. Sepoy Banat khan Afridi was shot in the arm while giving sentry duty on 4th December 2011 but he kept his vigil till the time loss of blood made him unconscious. In another tank related accident Lance Naik Syed Ejaz Hussain Turi had embraced shahadat two days earlier {2nd December 2011} at Ghiljo, Ejaz was attached with Orakzai scouts, he was part of Independent Scouts Cavalry Squadron; it was an accident fire, Ejaz could have saved his life but call of duty for him was more important than saving his life.

Aim of the post was mainly to check the main supply route of miscreants leading towards Nikka Ziarat and Saman Bazaar through Dargai.

On 2nd December 2011 three fire raids were carried out by the miscreants on the post, first one took place at 0950 followed by another at 1330 and last one at 1700 hours. Cover was ample thus miscreants would fire few rounds create a sense of insecurity and when scouts were confident that attack has been beaten back then another raid would take place. This is one major disadvantage of being fortified. Sammo Killi sustained 22 attacks from the miscreants. Captain Asad Kamal was the post commander and he through his leadership and bravery kept the morale of the post high. Two leading miscreants were killed in these encounters namely Ibrahim and Muslim. Asad finally decided to come out and raid the miscreants, twice he conducted successful minor operations to regain the notion of victory. Lance Naik Arif Yusafzai was another stalwart scout, he was brave and daring in nature. During one of the miscreants attack on the post Arif stealthily moved out and stalked them, his sudden and unexpected arrival on the scene behind the miscreants created a ripple scenario which led to chaos among the rebels. Lance Naik Arif was part of initial assault group which took the Cheelosar feature, was part of mortar group which had stayed at the base and later went up. On 4th December 2011, Arif was again part of a raiding party which had gone out from Sammo Killi to dominate the area, he was again carrying the mortar. While coming back the party came under attack, it was dusk, and scouts were retreating in an orderly manner by fire and move. Arif had fired six mortar bombs on the suspected miscreants positions; mortar firing is bit technical in nature, one can fire blindly also but to hit the miscreants one has to observe the fall of round and adjust accurately being a perfectionist Arif always preferred the second mode. It was during this observation that he

was initially hit with a stray bullet on his right arm yet this brave son of soil again rose to have an observation which was pertinent for the safety of his comrade; he had a mortal blow and embraced shahadat few hours later..

Subedar Major Muhammad Ullah Mohmand also needs special mention. Role of Subedar Major is very important because in our culture he acts as a bridge between the scouts and the command echelon, passing the pulse both way. Muhammad Ullah was a source of strength for the wing and wing commander; in such circumstances when operational requirements are multi fold and there is little time for peace or solace the mental harmony of wing commander and wing subedar major is a force multiplier. SM as he is commonly known gives time tested advices and tips to the wing commander, he knows by virtue of his long service more about individual behaviour than the officer; in most of the cases. Muhammad Ullah was it seems never got tired, all the time running around to make sure his scouts are well fed and logistically strong. Naib Subedar Sher Azam Wazir was the administration officer of the wing, his systematic administrative arrangements which only he can explain; worked much better than what is taught in books. Posts were separated by rather long distances through circuitous routes on feeble tracks. Food, water, ammunition had to be supplied to these routes irrespective of weather. Wazir made an excellent use of animal transport, mules and donkeys also need rest and recuperation, they are equally affected by the weather and good food acts a catalyst to them; Wing purchased special ration for the animal transporters.

He rose to the occasion by ensuring that all scouts are getting warm food, managing their leave, relief and rotation on posts ‘ *Subedar Major Muhammad Ullah worked with complete dedication, selflessness and positivity which not only helped the troops to fight fully fed and equipped but also acted as a morale booster during entire conduct of Operation Mamuzai*’.

Role of junior commissioned officers is very important in Tochi Scouts because shortage of commissioned officers put extra responsibility on them. Subedar Noor Salim Yusufzai act in evacuating an injured scout Sepoy Momin Khan Bangash highlights this. Momin was hit in the head by a sniper bullet while he was performing the sentry duty, he had just raised his head to have a better observation when the bullet pierced through his helmet and stuck in his head. It was a dark night, post on a high ground with nearest track almost two miles away from where a vehicle can rescue Momin to safety. Noor Salim along with four other scouts carried their wounded comrade through darkness and intermittent fire, they walked through the stony and slippery terrain, sweating and panting they finally managed to reach the QRF which had also arrived on getting the signal of Momin’s injury. Momin is still alive but he has not recovered fully. Naib Subedar Rehmat Ullah Bhattani is another example of junior commissioned officer’s importance and their role. He remained at Sammo Killi Post for well over twelve weeks at a stretch, a source of strength for his post commander Captain Asad and later Lieutenant Islam ; Rehmat was always a volunteer for any arid or for that matter any work which involves attacking the miscreants. He hates paper work.

Naik Asghar Hussain Bangash signal operator No.1 wing recalls, he was part of the leading company A Company on the night of 15th November 2011. He was part of Lieutenant Islam group.

We started our march at 2100 hours from three pimples, Taliban were sitting at Daggar bazaar, we climbed up the Dappa Top, then descended down to Tarri Village, cross the water channel and reach the other group at the base. We had 25000 rounds of LMG, jackets were heavy, three RPG-7s along with 12 rounds per launcher, two grenades per scout. 60mm mortar was with us. We had ten LMGs. Climb was difficult, we had manageable moon light. At Fajr we were at top, we offered prayers, I was carrying solar panel and at top I placed it there for charging, which prove handy next night. There was a house at the top where there were few men moving around. They fired on us which hit Naseeb Wazir. In peaceful time it took us three hours, cold was another factor, we had no warm bedding. Some of us had sleeping bags, rest would just close up, one of my friend Lance Naik Gul Makhan had one chaddar. At evening we were fired upon heavily, we took cover behind stones that is why artillery fire was called upon. We then climb towards the Cheelosar Top through fire and move, we again reach at the top by Fajr, offered our prayers.

Sepoy Altaf Yusufzai was hit on second day when we were advancing towards the right shoulder. He was evacuated. We spend two nights at the top and then advanced towards the Flag Group. Sepoy Afzal Afridi picked one grenade which was time fused, he threw it and it blasted away. I remained at the top for another four months, there was no water. Food was provided through mules, each scout was provided four chapattis, there was no arrangements for cooking food but after one month the earlier house which was now abundant was utilised for cooking. Weather was the main issue, sleeping bags were provided after three days on mules, ten on one day and ten more on second day.

Captain Asad was with B Company. Ghakhai was occupied on 17th November. Arif Sepoy Yusufzai was hit at check post established at Shin Alai {short of it}.

No.2 Wing Tochi Scouts. 2009 - 2012

No.2 Wing Tochi Scouts marched out of Tochi Valley in 2008 to confront the miscreants in Swat, from there after successful operation it was moved to Bajaur Agency in 2009 and finally it was given a respite for a year and half at Gomal Zam Dam, it has arrived back to its home base in December 2012. Three different officers commanded it in this epic era. Lieutenant Colonel Naseer Janjua took it to Buner, Lieutenant Colonel Asim Baig took over from Janjua and major operations in Bajaur were fought under him, however role of Major Azhar Sahi needs to be highlighted as for a fortnight he performed the duty of acting wing commander with zeal and dash. Presently the wing is being commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Arshad Hussain.

June 2008 was the start of journey, initially the wing moved to Mangal Bagh at Bara to apprehend Mangal Bagh a miscreant leader, he was heading the Lashkar-e-Islam. His home was destroyed but he himself managed to escape. One scout was injured in this operation.

Hangu. August – April 2009

On 23rd August 2008 Wing moved to Hangu, where it was deployed at Doabba/Zargari area near Orakzai Agency. Reason for such sudden move from Barra area was the increased Taliban activities in the area. On 22nd August 2008 at 1400 hours eight policemen were killed in an ambush at Naryab, a small town close to Tirah Valley on the main line of communication from Hangu. Initial mission was to establish the writ of government in the area, however with passage of time it took another shape; to curb the sectarian terrorism in the area.

Wing under command Lieutenant Colonel Janjua reached Hangu within a day of receiving orders. This is another characteristic of Scout wings that they are by virtue of their light equipment and flexible organisation are able to move much more quickly than any other military organisation.

Hangu Bazaar is the hub of communication, two parallel roads lead out in a westerly direction, north-westerly track after a twenty odd miles of loop joins in with the main metallic road which links Hangu with Thall onwards to Parachinar. This north-westerly track was the main source of irritation for the government, it was slowly going under Taliban control. Important villages or choke points on this track are Darband, ahead of Darband a track leads to famous Lockhart/Samana Post into Orakzai Agency onwards towards Tirah. Billyamin, Banda Tangi, Shinwari, Nariab {site of policemen's killing} the other road from Hangu moves in a westerly direction linking it with Thall onwards to Parachinar. On this road Doabba is an important small town, it also forms a communication hub with tracks leading towards the Orakzai Agency. Doabba lies in upper Miranzai whereas almost in the midpoint {Hangu-Doabba} is Lower Miranzai; both are Bangash.

Wing had to establish posts and ensure peace in the area from Hangu – Doabba on East – West axis and towards north Samana was the limit

On 25th August Wing started its operation clearing the main road and establishing posts on it, company headquarters was established at Doabba. On 26th August area was cleared from Hangu- Darband- Billyamin and another company established its command echelons at Billyamin. Two more check posts were established till Samana and further posts were established between Samana and Doabba which included Gulistan Fort, Shinawari, Sarmlo Kando, Zargari, Kahi and Doabba itself. Among these Sarmalo Kando was hit hard by the Taliban for the reason that there free movement towards Nariab was restricted. Army action {38 Frontier Force} had already cleared the area and now it was left to the No.2 Wing to consolidate the gains. There were fire raids on the posts but nothing to match the severity of Tochi Valley.²⁹⁸

In winter of 2008 another dimension was added to the situation, sectarian friction which already exists in the area but remains within limits. With the ongoing operation against Taliban the situation started deteriorating. Taliban especially Baitullah Mahsud had visited the Hangu and there were plans to eliminate the Muslims practicing the Shia covenants. This is why this whole war against Taliban is important to win because these people have no

²⁹⁸ Interview with Subedar Hidayat Afridi { October – November 2012 }

tolerance for anyone else apart from those who adhere to their school of thought as far as religion is concerned.

Muharram's new moon sighting affected the wing deployment, already scouts were deployed on posts but now all these posts were reduced in strength and wing concentrated itself at Hangu. Orakzai and Bangash lives in Hangu and both have adherents of both Shia /Sunni faith. Main threat was from Tirah valley which is overwhelming Sunni in nature .Shermast Pir is a dominating feature which allows trans agency movement between Hangu – Tirah. On one side are Sunni and on other resides Shia. There is a Ziarat at the top. Wing Headquarters was established at Shermast Pir. Feature itself is like any typical mountain high ground, not very difficult to climb, have sufficient spaces at interval for establishing posts. Naib Subedar Aurangzeb Khattak was the post commander at one such post {Ziarat Post}, he recalls.

'First eight days of Muharram passed away peacefully, but the major test was on the coming three days because as per tradition the Shias take out Tazia and a huge number of people follows it, it is at this stage that maximum chances of sabotage activities are more likely to occur. Brigade had requested the Shias not to take out this Tazia, another factor was that Shia from Kohat were also bringing out a procession towards the Hangu. In the end Taliban ambushed both of these processions near Flour Mill. Much has been written about ambushes, how deadly they are to tackle even for well trained military regiments and here a civilian procession was now under attack. Free use of light machine guns, small arms fire, RPG-7 were made. There was a chaos and panic, with shrieks of people filling in between the firing, blood of own brothers freely flowing on the road, sky filled with dust and smoke, it was nothing but a civil war.

At my post on one side at the foot hill was a Shia Village and on tenth Muharram a sizeable strength of Taliban advanced from Tirah direction. Firing of rockets and mortars was going in the air regarding which none could do anything as it was being fired from the hideouts. My duty or the purpose of my post was to protect this Shia Village, at mid day this Taliban lashkar started advancing, our post was the hurdle and as such I saw them climbing upwards. A showdown was on hand in which nothing else but bloodshed was imminent. All our posts occupied the battle stations, there were three posts which were inter supporting each other but still had blind spots in between'.

Subedar Aurangzeb on that day diffused a highly tense situation but walking straight towards the miscreants and telling them without mincing any words that it is his duty to protect the village and his whole platoon is willing to sacrifice their lives to honour their commitment, it will be much better if you just leave this area otherwise I will slaughter you all here. Taliban did not left the area immediately but they also did not violated the sanctity of village, after half an hour they just retreated. Subedar Aurangzeb was the IGFC Commendation Card for his deeds apart from cash prize.

Wing on 24th April 2009 was ordered to move towards the Buner in Swat to deal with Taliban.

Buner. April – August 2009

North of Mardan lies the Malakand agency, Swat river separates it from Swat State, on the North-west of Mardan is Buner District, a metallic road leads to it passing through Rustam with Ambella the first major town and then comes Daggar.

Wing moved from Hangu to Peshawar and from there it moved to Mardan and reached Rustam in two days. From Rustam the move was precarious and all eventualities were catered for. Two army regiments were also part of this clearing force namely 30 Punjab and 3 Sind regiment, one Special Organisation Group of frontier corps, No.2 Wing of Khyber rifles were also part of this force. Subedar Aurangzeb Khattak was also part of it and we follow his account

We cleared the road on foot, scouts were marching in front, establishing piquet and army followed us, area is green, fertile and pleasant. Population not very hostile, at that time majority of them had left the area towards safe places. ROD was led by Naib Subedar Ismail. We had our first parhau {halt} at Sairbeen, a small tourist spot where a hotel was still functioning. Weather was hot however abundance of fresh water in the form of natural springs made it very comfortable. Curfew was imposed in the area thus not much of vehicular traffic. I recall that Naib Subedar Ismail had a bath in one of the spring as well. After a halt the ROD party again moved forward to clear the road ahead, Ismail went ahead with one major of Mahsud scouts attach with us. Special Services Group {SSG} of army was also part of our force but they were heliborne and not marching on ground with us.

We had our first casualty ahead of Sairbeen. On 30th April 2009 Naib Subedar Ismail Marwat was leading the ROD party, they had reached a petrol pump, where one vehicle was parked, and Ismail informed the rear headquarters on wireless about it. Disregarding the instructions, Ismail went ahead along with Sepoy AttaUllah Marwat to physically ensure that the vehicle is safe. One native boy was present at the petrol pump, he lured the party towards the pump by stating that he knows where the weapons of miscreants are hidden. Few moments later the same native boy blew himself up. Both Ismail and Atta Ullah were martyred on the spot. When we reached the site, the body parts of Atta Ullah were found almost two hundred meters away such was the impact.'

Wing established its headquarters at Daggar, in a government girl's college building. Daggar is an administrative and communication hub. South east of Daggar a road leads towards Dewana Baba town, wing was entrusted with the responsibility of clearing the area east of Daggar. Naib Subedar Aurangzeb Khattak, Subedar Zulfiqar Turi and Captain Meraj of SOG were part of initial force which moved eastwards along with two tanks. However both the tanks were hit, one was burnt and other retreated along with the force back to Daggar. This first incident highlights the area, terrain, opposition and the difficult coming days. Notion of victory so important in any war; conventional or unconventional now rested with miscreants.

After two days of planning and recuperation No.2 wing again move towards Dewana Baba, the distance from Daggar to Dewana Baba is not more than 25 Kilometres, this time

through immaculate planning and systematic clearance of area the force managed to reach objective without any incident. It does not mean that the route was safe, rather the force was ambushed twice. Thick growth, comparatively high ground on both side of road gives an advantage to any hiding armed group. On both occasions prompt artillery and Cobra Attack helicopters provided fire support. Mere presence of security forces at Dewana Baba was enough to take the notion of victory away from miscreants.

Posts were established at Dewana Baba and after two days wing set course towards Chagarzai which is at a distance of 35 Kilometres away from Daggar. This route is much more difficult than the track leading towards Dewana Baba. It is steeper, narrow and have more ambush sites. There was one encounter with Taliban on the way who after short engagement withdrew. Force reached Chagarzai and after two nights stay came back to Daggar.

Now the direction of move was towards the North North West of Daggar, Pir Baba is another small enclave perched high on mountains at a distance of 14 Kilometres from Daggar; it was the next objective. To reach Pir Baba few intermediately high points had to be cleared. Bai China was the first hurdle. Two Bell 412 Helicopters also accompanied the advancing force. At the top initially one helicopter was able to touch down but instantly it came under hostile fire in which one bullet hit the feet of the pilot. Before it pulled up two scouts had managed to get down and as such were now left alone at the peak. Wing Commander was monitoring the situation from the second helicopter; he made sure that his scouts are evacuated. Captain Meraj of SOG played a key role in this operation. Bai China was attacked again after two days. It was pounded with artillery fire for a day before the commencement of advance. Cobra Helicopters also took part in this operation, No.2 Wing managed to reach and occupy the peak. Logistically it is much more difficult to sustain a force at the peak than at the base, at this place lack of water was the major issue, and force remained without water for two days.

Ghazi Khanna also had to be cleared, occupied and kept under observation before Pir Baba could be invested. Tochi Scouts were in rear of the army led by 30 Punjab along with two tanks; these tanks were hit as in Dewana Baba. Force retreated back to Ghazi Khanna stayed the evening and next day arrived at Daggar. Air force was called in for support for the next move which took place very next day, after the bombing and strafing the force moved again in the same order of battle as before. Promptly Ghazi Khanna was occupied and No.2 Wing moved two kilometres ahead on the western outskirts and reached a village by the name of Nawab. No resistance was offered by the natives, parhau was established at the village, night was spent in peace. Wing stayed two nights here and then move forward towards Pir Baba. Area is open and generally flat, thus the force had no major resistance in reaching the objective. At Pir Baba Ziarat an IED was a discovered which was planted at the grave itself. Troops were able to move freely in bazaar, people welcomed them with open arms and warm hearts.

Kalpanrai

Kalpanrai is a small village west of Ghazi Khanna, a track leads to it. It is approximately ten kilometres away. Short of village heavy fire was brought upon the force but retaliatory fire soon silenced the miscreants' muzzles. Yasin a notorious Taliban commander was heading the miscreants, his house was searched, it was all luxury, colourful women under garments were in abundance; these were collected and burnt by Tochi Scouts. In the village and adjoining bazaar no resistance was offered, an old FC post along with two schools was burnt down by the Taliban in the past.

East of Kalpanrai lays Kingar Gali at a distance of 14 Kilometres, this village was also cleared without any resistance worth noting. However two IEDs were detected. Wing now moved towards the west to establish link with Swat by clearing the area. Karakar Mountains are another key feature which had to be physically cleared before any long lasting peace could be maintained in the area. It was cleared with feeble resistance offered by miscreants who now relied heavily upon IEDs to create friction in the advancing forces path.

Wing now arrived back to Daggar, it was now start of winter, almost four months of nonstop campaigning. Next task for the wing was to clear the Pir Baba again where few incidences of sniper attacks had taken place in recent past. Kala Kandao was the suspected hide out of the miscreants almost 25 Kilometres North West of Pir Baba involving steep climb. It was during this operation that bomb disposal Scout was injured.

Naib Subedar Mujahid Hussain Turi was the post commander at Kalpanrai. A small beautiful village two kilometres short of Dewana Baba and twenty kilometres ahead of Daggar. He narrates.

'After the successful operation in Buner the people started coming back, there was a festive look and atmosphere in the air, it seems as if every house is celebrating a marriage. People of the village had been terrified of Taliban. The celebrations continued for well over a month. People used to visit our post bringing good wishes and praying for our health and prosperity. I remember one particular incident , one day seven small school children came to our post and handed over ten packets of juice to sentry on duty, the boys were led by Mir Afzal himself a student of class fifth. We tried our best to return the packets but they simply refused to take it back. Next morning their teacher Mr Farman came and we narrated him the whole story to him and he updated us that children have saved their meagre money to buy us the gifts as a token of their gratitude.

On 22nd August 2009 we were ordered to move for Bajaur, whole village had closed their shops, people stood on both sides of the road, and women were standing on the roofs with Holy Koran and praying for our success. Syed Hussain the principal of the local school was leading this farewell procession.

No.2 Wing & Fakir of Damdola

On 23rd August No.2 Wing Tochi Scouts was ordered to move to Bajaur Agency. Lieutenant Colonel Naseer Janjua who had led his wing in an admirable manner was promoted to next rank, he took over Mahsud Scouts. Major Azhar Sahi acted as wing

commander for a fortnight before Lieutenant Colonel Asim Baig took over the command. Wing was assigned the responsibility of establishing the writ of state in the agency. Check posts were established initially in Barkholozo area and later operations were conducted in the surrounding areas of Damdola to capture the mountain ridge of Khazai Sar. Apart from No.2 Wing Tochi Scouts there was a company of SSG's 8th Battalion in support. No.2 Wing suffered 17 casualties in this period, four scouts embraced shahadat and thirteen other were injured. Three junior commissioned officers were awarded IGFC commendation cards. Wing remained in Bajaur Agency from September 2009 – September 2010.

Bajaur Agency is bounded in the north by Dir, on east by Swat, on south east by Malakand agency, Mohmand Agency is in south and Afghanistan on west. Famous pass of Nawagai is also situated in this agency. Bajaur Scouts are the main military force in the agency. Bajaur also has a history of insurgency which is probably due to having joint border with Afghanistan. In 1960-61 a military operation was conducted by 7 Infantry Division in the area, more particularly in Khar. From Timergarh in Dir a metallic road leads into the agency passing through Torghundi, Alizai onwards to Nawagai Pass leading into Mohmand Agency; short of Nawagai Pass another road leads into a more southerly pass known as Sarlarai which also descends down into Mohmand Agency. Khar which is the administrative and Bajaur Scouts headquarters is almost in the mid of this main and sole line of communication. The troubled areas where No.2 Wing operated are located north of this road towards the Dir and Afghanistan. A road leads northward from Khar towards Inayat Qilla which is a sub- administrative headquarters of the Bajaur Agency. North east of Inayat Qilla at a distance of ten miles is a small mountain hamlet of Damdola, Maulvi Fakir Muhammad was the chief troublemaker. Road or track itself terminates few miles ahead of Inayat Qilla.

Wing spent a night at Timergarh and next day reached Inayat Qilla where headquarters were established in a college. Tactical, political and tribal situation was quite precarious, No.2 Wing of Bajaur Scouts was almost besieged at Kitkot. First mission was to open this road link. The scenario is almost replica of Tochi Valley where similarly No.5 Wing of Tochi Scouts was also in the same situation at Boya in same time period.

IGFC Major General Tariq Kundi came to Inayat Qilla and made a passionate and emotional speech which roused the scouts' heart, he apprised them regarding the current situation. The road leading from Inayat Qilla to Kitkot in the North - West was under the control of Taliban, IGFC very rightly said that only government can rule this country and area and no secondary power is allowed to do so. He further highlighted that nation, frontier Corps and people of the area have pinned high hopes on you, you are their saviour, I hope you will not let me down. ' we all were really charged up with his speech and responded with battle cry of Tochi Scouts, long Live Pakistan, long live Frontier Corps and other religious war slogans.' Recalls Naib Subedar Mujahid Husain Turi who was present there.

Inayat Qilla – Kitkot

The plan envisaged by Major Azhar after consulting his JCOs was to move forward two companies after a gap of three days. Next day the JCOs had a conference among themselves and later took their wing commander in confidence. They had the apprehension

that their initial plan of moving out after three days might have been compromised thus they advocated move within two days. Major Azhar readily agreed to this readjustment of plan.

Naib Subedar Mujahid Turi and Naib Subedar Gul Nawaz Bhattani had the difficult task of clearing the road till Qamar Killi which is 15 kilometres ahead of Inayat Qilla., they moved out at 0200 hours on foot, Mujahid leading and by morning they had established the piquet on the road. Gul Nawaz and his men were now at the start point. They have achieved something which can make the Tochi Scouts feel proud, these junior commissioned officers through personal leadership, bravery and astute tactical understanding of the situation had turned the tables on their opponents. At 0415 hours, Mujahid uttered the magic words of 'Da Toro Shrung' the code word for success. On hearing these words the wing moved out and reached Qamar Killi where check posts were established. Notion of Victory was snatched away from the Taliban by the Tochi Scouts. Wing had moved out from Inayat Qilla in an extended line with two companies moving forward, one company performing the duty of QRF and one was deployed on piqueting.

On third day after establishing post at Qamar Sar the wing move forward towards the Kitkot, Tarkholay is a small place short of Kitkot, wing established itself here. Posts were established at Barkholozo under command subedar Ejaz, Meena Mor was another check post, company headquarters was also established here in a vocational college. The besieged wing of Bajaur Scouts was now free, link up with them was established.

Subedar Hidayat Afridi was performing the duty of wing junior quartermaster and also heading the quick reaction force. It was his duty to daily fetch the ice and other fresh items from the Khar for the wing. He recalls one particular incident.' My usual routine was to clear the road, be ready for any emergency. One day, it was Ramadan and I had gone to the Khar along with my QRF which comprised of thirty odd scouts to bring the ice. Luckily on that day there was no ice available thus we move back rather earlier. On our way back I spotted three motorcycles with six Taliban riding. I challenged them to surrender their arms but they refused and started firing on us. They were in fact an ambush party which was set for us but our unscheduled move back from Khar had disrupted their plans. We killed two of them and rest all fled from the spot; I was given a commendation card for this. On another day, our QRF saved the day for No.2 wing of Bajaur Scouts located at Kitkot under the command of Lieutenant colonel Saleem. They were caught in an n ambush and sent us a signal for help. Our QRF reached the spot in short time, I was part of this QRF along with Subedar Aurangzeb, and Major Azhar was leading us, a brave officer. Our arrival tilted the balance and forced the Taliban to flee from the scene.'

This part of Bajaur is known as Bara Mamun, People had a sigh of relief on this moral and physical victory of the scouts. According to Naib Subedar Mujahid Hussain Turi 'on the occasion of Eid people had a festive outlook and they told us that it is after three years they are celebrating Eid with festive look'. Damdola falls in Chotta Mamun and it had yet to be cleared a showdown with Fakir of Damdola was on hands.

Mulla Saiyid

Bajaur Agency is a small agency in terms of area as compare to Tochi Valley, other prominent difference is in terms of geography. Area of operation is like a tulip with a very short base, more or less like the Kazha Valley; in Tochi Valley the river by itself is the main feature which is lacking in Bajaur.

Ahead of Inayat Qilla the valley small, surrounded by high mountains {6000-8000 feet}. It is green dotted with trees and small hamlets interlink with hilly tracks which are more or less decided by nature itself, population is not sparse as in Tochi Valley. On the eastern edge of Inayat Qilla starts the mountain range which moves northwards and west ward, thus encircling the vale, beyond this mountain range flows Kunar River which is part of Afghanistan. Complete valley is known as Mamun.

For the time being, wing after establishing its post and having established a link with the Kitkot now had to keep this communication link open, dominate the area and above all to wrest the notion of victory away from the miscreants. Wing had bomb disposal party from the army but these IEDs seems to have brought a revolution in military affairs. They are easy to made and easy to plant anywhere and then explode with either as a time tuned, pressure related or simply through signal. There were no suicide attacks on the wing. Taliban had established their 'Qatalgah' or slaughter house in the thick growth area on the track Qamar Sar- Kitkot.

Wing now moved towards elimination of area on the north east of Qamar Qilla, it advanced into Salarzai. This is a tehsil administrative area also known as Little Mamun. Headquarters was established at Meena Mor, other major villages in the area are apart from Qamar Qilla, are Sar Khalozao, Barkhalazao, Tarkho Qilla, Jangzai. During this period search and cordon operations were also conducted. One particular operation in Tarkhalo is worth mentioning because free use of rocket launcher, recoilless rifles took place. Naib Subedar Aurangzeb was injured in this operation along with Sepoy Hadi Gul. Subedar Rasm was hit with a bullet but his bullet proof jacket saved his life, while the miscreant attacked Rasam another scout quickly threw three grenades on towards the attacker which killed him.

Before the start of operation another incident occurred which highlights the Fog of War, Khan of Pasht is a pro government malak, he had posted his own men at the Turgat Peak for the protection of scouts camp down below, they were hit by own attack helicopters, four of them were killed and scored were injured. Later own helicopters evacuated the wounded and flew them to Peshawar for treatment.

In October 2009 Mulla Saiyid welcomed the scouts to its environs. Major Azhar took an advance party of 120 Scouts including Subedar Rasam Bhattani, Sami Marwat and Naib subedars Mujahid Turi and Kimya Gul Bhattani. Wing Commander Lieutenant Colonel Asim Baig had an aerial reconnaissance of his intended target. Wing headquarters was established here and posts were established on the surrounding heights known as Bajizo, Bar Mulla Saiyid, Sar Mulla Saiyid, Turgat and few other intermediaries were given numbers. Turgat was a dominating feature. The overall situation was not much different from the Madda Khel-

Khaddar Khel tribal feud. Within the high ground few villages were pro-Taliban like Banda, Kazha and Damdola itself while majority were pro-government. The similar issue of water supplying to these posts and its inherent dangers were as much alive here as in North Waziristan Agency. Three posts were relying upon animal transport for water carrying where as in other the scouts were carrying it themselves. Food was cooked centrally at Mulla Saiyid and taken to the posts. It was a deviation from the standing procedures of scouts developed over a hundred years of experience; every post has to be independent in terms of ration with ample supply of ammunition. One reason for having a high number of cooks in wing organisation is mainly due to this factor. Reorganisation of wings overlooked this key factor and resultantly in the new organisation the strength of cooks {four in each company} is not enough to cater independent cooking at each post. Posts were established, area domination patrolling was also carried out. Posts were named as 70A, B,C,D, 70 & then 70B. It was not in any sequence and this haphazard numbering was its security and safety. 70B was the first post moving west wards towards Damdola and 70A was the last one. The post at the base of Turgat was known as BajjiSar Post.

Wing was able to occupy and establish post at Turgat without suffering any casualty although heavy fire was exchanged with Taliban. Sepoy Kamal Khan Orakzai embraced shahadat at Turgat due to sniper fire on 27th October 2010. IEDs remained a major concern for the wing commander. Month later {9th November 2009} Subedar Bakhti Badshah Khattak and Lance Naik Khumar Gul Khattak both laid their lives in similar pattern. Sepoy Pir Zada Bhattani was also injured near Mulla Saiyid due to one IED exploding while scouts convoy was passing by Sepoy. Bakhti Badshah was suffering from fever and as such opted to travel back on a vehicle. Another accident was uncalled but then these things are part of operational hazards, on 22nd December Sepoy Abid Qayyum Orakzai was injured when Lance Naik Abdul Aziz fired on him accidentally while performing sentry duty; he simply could not recognised him in the darkness

January 2010 – Damdola

By the start of New Year 2010, progress made enabled military to comprehensively launch a major and concentrated push to eliminate Taliban from the scene.

On 28th January 2010, No.2 Wing advanced upward and east ward towards the capture of high grounds surrounding Damdola Village. 12 NLI & 25 Punjab Regiment pushed for Damdola from the multi direction along the base of mountain ridge whereas Tochi Scouts and a company of SSG to capture the high ground.

Moving eastwards towards Damdola the Taliban had dug well camouflaged trenches and firing positions; in layers each supporting the other. Advance started early in the morning and by evening No.2 Wing managed to reach mid-way, Kazha Bowl was the major hurdle as accurate fire put a lid on advance. Fading light diminished any support from attack helicopters and scouts along with SSG withdrew.

Four scouts of No.2 Wing Tochi Scouts embraced shahadat while five other were wounded. SSG also suffered almost equal number of casualties, area was cleared and it played a key role in eliminating the Maulvi Faqir Muhammad and Maulvi Umar from the area, writ of the government was established and peace restored.

Taliban were hiding in the high grounds with villages like Banda, Ghunday, Darra acting as their popular base support, using IEDs, suicide bombing and occasional ambushes they tried to demoralise the scouts, thereby increasing their area of influence. No major single battle has ever taken place between the militants, tribes, miscreant, Taliban in last half a century or even more where two opponents have faced each other in strength. Army and scouts always overwhelming in numbers and firepower thus starts eliminating the outer or inner cores of these anti state elements and with each victory the notion of victory is attained which starts reducing popular base support resulting in a peace pact between two.

Wing was spread yet it was compact, well oiled, battle hardened, in a high state of morale which naturally comes in military units from victories attained on ground. Winter had been tough for the wing but it sustained. Logistics were much improved and highly appreciated by the scouts. Leave, food, pay, equipment, medical facilities, rest all were ensured by the chain of command who set personal example as well. In winter nothing is more demoralising than a luke warm food.

Damdola was captured by the army, scouts now had to do the mopping around Mulla Saiyid which was accomplished without any major incident.

January 2012 was no different from the previous years, Sepoy Salim Iqbal Bangash embraced shahadat and Sepoy Rehmat Ullah Khattak received minor injuries when an IED was exploded on 2nd January 2012. These two along with six other scouts had gone down from Bangidar Post to collect water. Mule was also killed in this explosion. There were twenty IEDs attacks in 2012 alone. After Bangidar it was Kalanjar II which had to tackle this menace on 3rd April, another IED was encountered near Zakeem Hospital on two RODs one on 8th April other on 15th August 2012. Amin Piquet also had its share when an IED was exploded near it on 3rd September. November 2012 at Kalanjar was like a rice paddy full of snakes after monsoon rain. On 11th November 2012 three IEDs were detected out of which one exploded. On 12th November Commandant Colonel Wajahat, Wing Commander Lieutenant Colonel Tariq, Adjutant Lieutenant Mohsin along with twenty scouts went to the post to physically inspect the security measures around the post. Kalanjar Post is a complex of three posts, out of which one is the main post and other two acts as listening posts. A night prior to the ROD the protective patrol occupies the outlying listening posts. Commandant along with other officers and scouts marched the entire track and then stood with Major Zameer his quartermaster and discussed the probable blind spots around the post. Other scouts also looked around, alert and probing the ground for any marks. Commandant's eyes scanned the area and the track, they then froze at his own steps. He was standing on an IED; without panicking he calmly walked away with other officers and at a safe distance indicated them the IED where all were standing around few minutes before. Lieutenant Mohsin had the honour of hitting it with a single shot; it exploded. Such is the risk involved and it is beyond

the comprehension of mortals to understand how the nature works. Month of January 2012 was heavy in terms of IEDs,

Rocket attacks also surfaced with MiranShah receiving three rockets on 7th January without any damage. In retaliation Gosh Post fired three high explosives bomb of 3 inch mortar, 89 rounds of 12.7mm gun and 60 rounds of light machine gun; Isha Post was also not lagging behind in retaliatory fire. One positive step was the immediate dispatch of a fighting patrol comprising of two platoons led by three officers to the probable site of rocket fire area. MiranShah was again hit with rockets on 29th January when two missiles landed close to fort. Similar results were seen when two more rockets landed inside the fort on 10th February. It is not just the fort rather the posts on its inner perimeter are part of it. Datta Khel & Sargardan are worst affected in this manner. These two posts along with Stadium Check Post are the front row of posts and invariably they on alternate days receive either small arms fire or rocket. In March the intensity of rocket attacks remained unaltered, on 11/12 March, on 12/13 March and on 18th March MiranShah was hit with missiles. Khar Kamar was hit with four RPG-7s on the night of 12/13th January no damage was incurred; one rocket hit the post's mosque.

Amin Post which has been sustaining the attacks valiantly since 2005 again stood to its name, on 3/4th February 2012 a fire raid was repulsed. Heavy fire is one of the safe way of beating back any attack, on this occasion 331 rounds of G-3, three RPG-7 rockets, two grenades were expended by Amin, and Banda Post also provided ample fire support. In 2012 Amin Piquet faced thirteen fire raids. Miscreants used RPG-7 and small arms in the fire raid. A fire raid is different from physical attack in sense that miscreants in fire raid use rockets and small arms weapon purely for creating terror, they hope that their rockets will create some kind of damage or loss of life. Physical attack on the other hand is well planned and well co-ordinate affair, it also starts with fire raid in most of the cases but at times miscreants have been using the ground to inch closer to the posts. Tut Narai attack of 2006 is an example of physical attack coupled with fire raid. Hassu Khel Post January 2006 is another example

Swiss Couple

Frontier Warfare is full of surprises; monotonous is the last word here. On 15th March 2012 Thall Piquet received two unexpected guests, one male and other a female clad in local dress. It was 0230 hours and sentry had no intention of opening the gates of the piquet for any one pretending to be in need. Experience has reinforced the mindset of the scouts that miscreants can make use of their traditional hospitality. The couple almost shrieked for help. Sentry called his superiors which included a captain as well. The couple narrated in mixture of English and Pashtu that they are Swiss citizens who were abducted in Baluchistan and now released by the Taliban or miscreants. Post commander asked the man to lift his shirt thereby ensuring that nothing is wrapped around his body. The couple was treated with hospitality and next morning they were helilifted to Islamabad. On a lighter side the girl complained of gender discrimination, after all 'I was not asked to lift my shirt'.

Spring - 2012

There were eight attacks on various posts of Tochi scouts in March 2012. On the night of 18/19th March 2012, miscreants launched a well-orchestrated attack on MiranShah, Amin, Thall, Gosh and Sargardan Posts. The usual pattern of miscreant is to carry out rocket fires for few days then to attack any one post physically. They also resort to deception by attacking posts other than the intended with fire and then silently creep onto the intended post. By March 2012 the Tochi Scouts and army units were well conversed with these tactics. Posts were well armed, well stocked and well led by veterans. There was only one casualty despite all these fire attacks, Amin Post had one casualty Naik Said Shah Afridi due to attack on 18/19th March 2012, early in the morning at 0545 hours one QRF moved from MiranShah for his evacuation. The QRF itself came under hostile fire, Naik Afridi is back on duty.

In April there was no let off in the intensity of miscreant's attacks, only the mode was changed they resorted to IEDs after their failure to subdue any of the Tochi Scouts posts. Sepoy Arshad Khan embraced shahadat while he was performing duty on a piquet, cause was an IED. Four more Tochi Scouts were injured when another IED exploded on 8th April near Zakeem Hospital, Subedar Laiq Khan Swati, Lance Naik Nasir Hussain Turi, Sepoy Noor Nawaz Khattak and Sepoy Signaller Taif Noor Mohmand were injured. There were six major incidents of fire and rocket attacks on Tochi posts in April alone without causing any damage.

Summer of 2012

From the preceding it is obvious that life in the Tochi Scouts was anything but thrilling, it was a blessing in disguise because by temperament these scouts love danger, and they like to live on the posts where they are at their best. What else a scout requires other than a machine gun with filled belts, good food and above all a well deserve leave. Life in Tochi Scouts was wonderful, exciting and fulfilling. The new uniform of combat dress finally replaced Khaki shalwar kameez, with Militia being worn twice a week.

From 2000 onwards and especially from 2005, special emphasis has been given to the administration and welfare of scouts living inside the fort and on posts. Water supply was made better with drilling of two wells {one is still in progress}, new lines were constructed, and recreation room's standard was raised. Medical complex was enlarged and enhanced, dental surgery was made possible in MiranShah. Children Park astride family quarters was renovated and made functional, quarters itself given fresh coat of paint every year. Junior commissioned officers mess was tiled, mosque and imam bargah tiled and taken care in befitting manner. Mosque was made air conditioned in summer of 2012 and provision of warm water installed. Over forty new toilets were constructed to cater for increase in the strength. Mechanical transport sheds were constructed in 2010 and in 2012 the complete mechanical transport is being shifted to under construction complex. Monsoon of 2010 wreak

the MiranShah Fort, one reason was the blocking of seasonal nullah by the army units. It was not their fault because any one coming and living at MiranShah for short duration is bound to have a different set of priorities. It was too late when Tochi Scouts realized that water is rising alarmingly. Electricity shortage is going to stay in the country in general and in NWA in particular for times to come. Tochi Scouts procured diesel generators for the scouts, latest being procured in August 2012. The timings in summer are from 1400 – 1630 hours and again from 1900-2300 hours. In winter it is from 1700 – 2300 hours. Solar lights were installed in the Fort in 2012. Provision of electric coolers for water, provision of vegetables, fruit and milk to scouts at much reduced rates is something part of Tochi Scouts heritage

In 2005-06 construction of scouts mess at MiranShah was initiated, construction of six scouts barracks was also started in MiranShah and one at Ghulam Khan along with construction of bachelor officers' quarters at Datta Khel and Khajauri; both were completed. Construction of four living bunkers along with stores at Gharlamai, construction of one cook house and store at Wacha Bibi, four living bunkers and a cook house at Baramand, three latrines/bathrooms at Ismail Khel, three living bunkers at Astaghai Narai, four living bunkers at Banda, three living bunkers at Machis, two bunkers at Khar Warsak, three living bunkers at Hussain Post, four living bunkers at Gandari, two bunkers at Mamoon Panga started in summer of 2006 and were all completed in time. Later almost all were handed over to army because Tochi Scouts wings were deployed at other places.

Reasons for highlighting all these administrative works is to bring forward one pertinent point; Tochi Scouts is here for last 117 years and as such it looks forward in marinating the existing structure and creating new one to meet the forthcoming requirement. In army all this is planned and executed at highest level or at cantonment sphere; at Tochi Scouts everything is executed under the orders of commandant, who is advised by the Qaum Commanders and JCOs. Army unit has to move out from one military station to the other in a couple of years but Tochi Scouts have to spend quarter of their life in North Waziristan Agency thus a high level of administration is paramount requirement.

Road Operating Days {ROD}

The very first instruction regarding the road moves were issued by HQFC on 29th September 2004 and again on 18th December same year, reminded on 24th October 2005 'commanders to ensure that troops are well acquainted with standing orders procedures on road operating days and defence against Improvised explosive devices'^{xlv}. The background of these instructions was the change in the attitude of locals towards the military after the start of operations in tribal areas. RODs were in use during the insurgency against Fakir of Ipi also and this time it was no exception. No individual was allowed to move out of garrison without an escort. Convoys were organised to move under the regulating headquarters established at Bannu and Tank. It affected the scouts because their leave was curtailed; 'only compassionate cases are allowed that too under coordination with civil administration and khassadars/mashrans of the area'. Till September 2005 no standing orders procedures were made for night move either by the Tochi Scouts or by the HQFC. Tochi Scouts made very comprehensive and detailed SOPs on the subject which area monograph of the area and

culture itself. *‘being an individualist the tribesmen excels at guerrilla warfare and is adept at camouflage, ambush and concealment, they are quick to notice, seize and exploit every opportunity, they rarely operate in large bodies and being self-sufficient operate independent rather than under the command of a leader, he would prefer to strike at the line of communication at unexpected location and time with precision’.*^{xlvi}

The weaknesses observed by the Tochi Scouts regarding the convoy moves were that the vehicles are overcrowded with high side and tail board restricting prompt action from troops. Single escort vehicles, improper vehicular distance, no piquet on line of communication, lack of inter vehicular communication and above all casual attitude of the troops. From that date till to day efforts are underway to overcome these basic observations because majority of the incidents which happened in relation to ROD are above all due to violation of these points.

Various methods were discussed, adopted and then further refined; road move became an exercise in itself. Initially four look out sentries in each vehicle were detailed in addition two loaded weapons were fixed on pedestals on each vehicle, wooden planks with sand bags on the side walls and floor were suggested. 100 meters inter vehicular distance was proposed. Communication was given the utmost priority. These instructions were adhered to but the one segment that troops should remain alert and vigilant is abstract in nature as no one can actually measure this level. As late as 2012 the troops are still hampered with the importance of wearing helmets during the move with military police taking down their numbers and passing it back to the respective formations.

The core issues with a road move includes protection from the IEDs which are of various categories, then ambush and finally the suicide bomber ramming himself or a vehicle. The route seldom passes through any builtup area. In the initial days the road movement was carried out at night with curfew imposed in the area.

Each of the threat to a convoy had different remedy measures. An IED can be detected and diffused through jammer which requires bomb disposal party to walk in front of the whole convoy and detect and diffuse them. It took ages for the convoy to reach MiranShah from Bannu or vice versa, a motorised convoy had to adopt the speed of a footman. Piquets were placed at the route. The leading scouts would take the positions on the side of the road and after some time distance another party of scouts to perform the same task and so on, each piquet had to be in observation of each other, stand almost whole day and then they would be picked up starting from the farthest and moving rearward. For IEDs diffusion armoured vehicles fitted with jammers were incorporated who would scan the area, jam the mobile frequencies, but this would also result in jamming of own communication. With the passage of time, Army Aviation helicopters were employed to provide protection to the convoys, attack helicopters flying overhead to thwart any ambush. Fixed Wing Y-12 aircraft were used who equipped with electronic and infrared equipment would fly a night before the road convoy over the area and recording any abnormal movement astride the road. For protection against the suicide bombers no traffic is allowed on curfew day, no person is allowed to walk astride the route. Still a heavy number of casualties took place due to the

incidents on ROD. This is no strange statement because Russian and American has also suffered the most on ROD, it seems that there is no fool proof system against such attacks.

Following incidents will highlight the situation. While standing on a ROD duty at MiranShah Bazaar or any other village along the route, a scout observes a small girl walking all alone, she has no idea that there is curfew and starts crying in the mid of road; what to do now?. This happens almost on every occasion on 60 odd miles of road that starts from Datta Khel – Qamar. All villages are astride the road and children as per their routine plays along. There are deaths which have taken place among the locals a day before the curfew and now dead body has to be given a funeral, there are delivery cases, critical injuries, persons need immediate medical treatment, lunatics walking on road, animals who are least pushed about curfew. These all need response and nothing can be given beforehand as an answer. It is the scout or the soldier on the spot who is the best judge; he has to be trained in this aspect.

In one instance a new unit arrives in the operational area {49FF} and on the very first day of ROD, while coming back from Amin Post with a QRF of Tochi Scouts, the ambulance of 49FF stopped abruptly in the main MiranShah Bazaar, when inquired about this sudden stoppage by Lieutenant Amin of Tochi Scouts the QRF commander, the driver of the ambulance very innocently replied ‘I had a doubt that in one of the tyres the air pressure is less so I have got down to check it’. This is the drawback of new regiments coming; they take time to have a mind-set in relation to the area. The driver of ambulance had no idea that at one time the instructions were to just leave the vehicle on road in case if it develops fault. {Hassu Khel incident of September 2007}.

By December 2005 it was accepted by the military that travelling of any uniform person even while coming back from leave is not safe in any public transport

Tochi Scouts had one wing each of Thall and Swat Scouts under its command but over all four wings of Frontier Corps were employed exclusively for ROD. The whole area of responsibility was divided into two sectors, one known as MiranShah and other as MirAli. MirAli Sector for ROD was under the responsibility of Thall and Swat Scouts. It had two segments, one MiranShah – Bannu and other Isha – Kamsarobi. In the MiranShah Sector Tochi Scouts had the responsibility of clearing the road from MiranShah – Datta Khel – Alwara, other route was MiranShah – Baramand and last was MiranShah – Ghulam Khan

ROD Routes Tochi Scouts

MiranShah being the communication hub had two roads, one going westwards towards the Boya – Datta Khel and other going northwards towards Ghulam Khan. On the Road Boya – Datta Khel, almost ten miles after Boya at Khar Kamar a track leads towards the Gharlamai – Alwara. In the same sub sector another track leads to Ismail Khel – Baramand. On the road towards the Ghulam Khan the junction was Dardoni II Post from where one track leads towards the Saidgi and other to Ghulam Khan

On MiranShah – Datta Khel route one wing of Thall was employed with one company of same wing being employed on MiranShah – Ghulam Khan Route also. Khar Qamar –

Gharlamai – Wacha Bibi – Alwara was the task of Tochi Scouts whereas Gharlamai – Baramand was given to the Swat Scouts.

Khyber Rifles one wing was employed on MiranShah – Isha and on Isha – Khamsarobi. Mohmand Rifles had their wing responsible for Isha – MirAli where as No.2 Wing Tochi Scouts was responsible MirAli – Khajauri and Kurram Militia from Khajauri – Baran.

IED

In the initial days because of fear of IED's the road was cleared by foot thus the whole wing had to walk on foot clearing the route. Scouts have been marching from MirAli – Bannu on foot and also on other tracks. The two leading scouts requires nerves of steel because they walk in front, looking for anything suspicious and if found then pioneer platoon and bomb disposal squad had to move forward and diffuse the explosives; a tiring time consuming and risky affair.

Simultaneously piquet's had to be placed enroute, every piquet in line of sight of other carrying their own water and food. These scouts had to remain in sight of others walking and also keeping an eye on the area. At evening all these piquet had to move down and march back in the same fashion.

A single day of move from Datta Khel to Bannu was not possible thus the troops moving back would have a night stay at MiranShah.

From 206 onwards when jammers were incorporated then the move became fast but still risky. Army employed Army Aviation helicopters for route protection for stand by and also used the Y – 12 aircraft placed at Qasim Base Rawalpindi for a night sortie before the ROD to have photo imagery of any suspicious movement along the road. Curfew was imposed on the ROD. In later years the ROD was conducted on Sunday, a detailed SOP's were issued by the Divisional Artillery 7 Division. Communication had to be excellent.

Presently on ROD the Tochi Scouts all officers less field officers move out early in the morning to the designated points in vehicles, dropping the sentries en route. For instance at MiranShah City every point leading towards the convoy route is protected with a Scouts who has the order to shoot anyone who violates the curfew, no civil vehicle is allowed to run on the road neither any civilian is allowed to come out of his house or loiter around the road for fear of suicide attack.

Convoys coming from Datta Khel stops at Boya from where the Tochi Scouts convoy also joins in and the convoy coming from Gharlamai too. These convoys reach MiranShah before noon from where a consolidated convoy then moves towards the Bannu. At MiranShah the convoy control is responsibility of army, all the vehicles are parked in the division area, names and numbers of vehicles and persons are noted, machine guns on fixed line are fixed on vehicles.

War develops new games and funs for the children of the area, it is true here. Children's favourite plaything in NWA seems to be teasing the military. They normally put an empty bottle in a shopping bag, attach a cord with it, put all of these under rubble, then

simply sit, and enjoy the bomb disposal drills of military over their pranks. By and large they are friendly, waves their hands when they see a convoy, rush to the walls of their villages and then simply laugh. At times one notices the grown up children rushing inside to pick their toddlers; to ensure that they should not miss the fun part.

There is a lunatic living in MiranShah and surprisingly he has survived all these war years, rocket attacks and IEDs, even today he is the only person who is seen walking around amidst intense firing going on from both sides in all directions.

One officer recalls his thoughts ‘a night before the ROD there are always thoughts of this being the last journey, the conditions of roads are such that no IED can be detected by merely pointing out to the fresh digging on it because road is always under repair. People on both sides of the road generally do not care much about curfew, children still play around an odd old woman will be seen moving with her donkey laden with firewood. There are numerous places for laying a perfect ambush; there are culverts, orchards, road passing through narrow villages, high cliffs on one side, blind bends. There is extreme tension in the air where even the loud burst of a tyre can play havoc on the minds of soldiers. Soldiers thus chat among each other, every passing mile brings signs of smiles on the war torn soldiers’ faces. My driver a Bhattani had served with a film actress in Lahore and thus the journey was pleasant...one feels as if tons of load have been taken away as the convoy reaches destination. That is the first time I had a good laugh and so did all others.’ Another officer who travelled in a hired taxi from MiranShah to Bannu had different fears ‘my biggest fear was that I should not be shot mistakenly for a miscreant, my driver was bent on increasing speed and overtaking the military vehicles, imagine a lone car in front of a military convoy speeding towards a check post...other option of moving inside the convoy was again full of danger and neither was the idea of being the last vehicle a good omen’. Ignorance is a blessing and probably it is true for those regiments who travel here for the first time. They have only heard the stories narrated by other regiments which naturally have more of drama and less of reality.

May 2012

There are seasons, days which are landmark in military history purely from academic point of view, events and incidents which leave a lesson for other combatants to learn. 6th May 2012 was one such day which highlights how a minor incident in Frontier Warfare can actually turn into a catastrophe. May is hot at

There were four infantry brigades and four wings of Tochi Scouts present in the Tochi Valley when the summer of 2012 started. Major General Ali Abbas took over the command of the division from Major General Ghayoor Akhtar in October 2011, he thus became the sixth general officer commanding in seven years {2005 – 2012}, Tochi Scouts command was handed over by Colonel Amir Akbar to Colonel Wajahat Hamdani in July 2011, Wajahat is also the sixth commandant since Tochi Scouts came under operational control of army. Divisional artillery was commanded by Brigadier Shahid, 103 Brigade by Brigadier Akhtar, there was segment of Frontier Works Organization busy in constructing road linking Ghulam Khan with Bannu. Army Aviation had its contingent comprising of two Cobras, one Bell 412

and one either Puma or Mi-17 helicopter. Pilots were residing in an annexe adjoining Tochi Mess, they were coming here for an attachment of fifteen days from 31, 33 and 35 Combat Squadrons apart from 25 or 27 Utility Squadrons. Aviation procedures which will play a critical role in coming days needs bit of elaboration. A Forward Operating Base was established at Peshawar since 2009 and in 2012 it was being commanded by Colonel Sardar Sajjad. All aviation missions had to be routed through him.

Tochi Scouts had two wings at MiranShah, No.3 Wing under Lieutenant Colonel Rab Nawaz, and No.4 Wing under Lieutenant Colonel Tariq Shinwari. No.5 Wing at Boya was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Ahmed Ali {in October Lieutenant Colonel Tariq took over from him} No.6 Wing at Ghulam Khan commanded by Lieutenant Colonel No.1 Wing at Sadda under Lieutenant Colonel Qaiser and No.2 Wing at Gomal Zam Dam under Lieutenant Colonel Subedar Major Zulfiqar Turi was performing the duties of Corps Subedar Major. Major Zameer as Quarter Master and Major Talha Naik as the intelligence officer of the corps. There were four Ghazi officers who were on a six month attachment with the Tochi Scouts. It was the policy of the army to post newly commissioned officers after attending the infantry course at Quetta to the Frontier Corps from where these officers were attached with different corps. Captain Hammad, Captain Hamzah, Captain Zulfiqar, Captain Islam were attached with Tochi Scouts.

May has a notorious history in sub-continent as far as the military or more precisely army affairs are concerned. In North Waziristan Agency, month of May 2012 at the start look promising, it was hot but not unbearable, cool breeze in the evening, light showers occasionally made it pleasant.

Notion of victory was with military, no serious incident had taken place since summer of 2009 when a Baluch Regiment convoy near Gharlamai was ambushed resulting in the shahadat of 16 soldiers. Since then army had been responding heavily on even minor violations, a kind of see-saw battle was going on between the military and miscreants with army emerging as a winner

6th May 2012

Amin Piquet is a strategic post as it dominates the area all around and keep the miscreants on toes through intimidatory fire and as such receives utmost reverence from them. It has been a front line post which has sustained the maximum attacks in last five years. In May the ROD was on Sunday and a coordinating conference held at divisional headquarters on Saturday to iron out ant issue. From the beginning of May , Amin was reporting suspicious movement of the miscreants, on 2/3 May it was hit with RPG-7 rockets , in retaliation it fire back over 600 rounds of LMG, 70 rounds of 12.7mm gun, six bombs of 60 mm mortars and six rounds of 75 mm RR. There were two tanks also placed at Amin. Miscreants were making use of the mud walls erected around local's fields, taking cover behind these walls they were carrying out their miscreant activities with a reasonable amount of safety. It was decided to demolish these walls on Sunday. GOC 7 Division Major General Ali Abbas and Commandant Tochi scouts Colonel Wajahat Hamdani were both on leave. In any case demolishing of a wall is not an operation which requires elaborate discussion; this is

what was perceived. Thus political administration was not taken into confidence, strange coincidence but even political agent was on leave. Captain Hammad of Tochi Scouts attended the conference, all Tochi Scouts knew was to be present outside the main gate at 0700 and report to Amin Piquet at 0730 hours.

Naib Subedar Sharbat Khattak is an experience hand in Frontier Warfare, for last almost seven years he is with QRFs and invariably taken part in almost all actions. He narrates *'I reached Amin at 0745 hours with four vehicles of QRF I had 32 scouts with me, there were four vehicles each carrying one RPG-7, one LMG and personal weapons like G-3 and SMG. Six magazines of G-3 and five magazines of SMG were also with these weapons, G-3 have twenty rounds in each magazine whereas SMG have 30 rounds capacity. Subedar Riaz Wazir of Tochi Scouts was the post commander. When we reached at the post the bulldozer was already there perched on a transporter. Army subedar asked me as what to do and I asked him the same question, later we both went up to the post. I wired Captain Hamzah our adjutant as what to do, he told me to wait as army officers are about to reach the post. Our own officer Captain Hammad was already placing piquet on MiranShah – Bannu road, he had two vehicles of QRF with him. Meanwhile army officers also join us which included Major Habib, Captain Suleiman and Lieutenant Noman.*

We all moved down in our respective vehicles, doser also followed us, there were two APCs also with us. The intended wall was erected on the eastern side of the by-pass road which is southern slope of Amin Post. The wall was in L shape, within the field there were two more walls which were meant to separate the ownership of the respective acres. On the western side of the road another wall runs in similar fashion but much smaller in length. The algal was the boundary, here the by-pass road dips then takes a right turn , runs along the algal for a mile and then takes a left turn; at this turn was a compound.

When we reached the intended wall site, there were children playing cricket in the mid of dry algal. One of the army officer fired an aerial warning shot but boys paid no heed, I then went to them and requested them to leave the area as we intend carrying out military work, they all left the playing arena. Deployment of troops was in a manner that all corners and all eventualities were well taken care of. Dozer started grazing the wall and within an hour it was over, then walls in the mid were demolished, after this came the turn of western wall which was also demolished, there were few houses in ruins which were also razed to ground'. Time now was past mid-day.

Brigadier Aqeel commander 103 Brigade alongwith the commanding officer of 36 Baluch Regiment was also on the site. *'Usually I would travel along the ROD route to observe how things are going on. I saw the demolishing operation from the Amin Piquet for half an hour and then I drove towards the Isha, while coming back from Isha, myself and commanding officer 36 Baluch regiment had a short stay in front of the stadium check post, it is here that I listen on the wireless that Captain Suleiman has been hit with bullets, we both immediately drove towards the site.'*

1400 -1700 hours. 6th May 2012.

After demolishing the wall it was decided to have a search of the compound which is located at the track bend almost a mile away from the initial demolishing site. Who decided this is shrouded in fog of war. Subedar Sharbat Khan Khattak recalls *'I initially put up reservation to the idea of searching the compound to Major Habib basing upon my past experience, our strength was not adequate for any unexpected resistance. We made two groups of fifteen each, the army group encircled the compound from the west and Tochi Scouts from the south and east. In the north a track passes in front of the compound and next to the track the algad. While moving towards the compound we made use of the ground, there were two man made water channels close to the compound and also an orchard.*

Myself and army group move forward towards the house, I was taken along for the reason that there was none among the army who could speak Pashtu. Compound had a normal ordinary gate made of iron sheet, army havildar simply kicked it but was bit strong for his leg. I interrupted and said that this is not how it works here, we have to get permission from the inhabitants of house for a search, and it took time to make army understand this cultural aspect. We knocked and shouted that we intend taking a search of the house, two voices came from inside one male and other of a little girl both denying us the permission. I was given a mega-phone earlier by Major Habib, as per the Riwaj I started counting from one to ten after which we were free to knock down the gate. I had reached till six when the same army havildar knocked down the gate with another kick. We all rushed inside, there was another mud wall facing us, it had two wooden doors, one on the eastern end and other opposing it. Army soldiers moved towards the eastern door, opened it and searched it; nothing was found.

I moved towards the western door, there was a wooden stair placed next to it, I climbed upon it and reached the roof which was ten feet high, inside I saw a courtyard with a tree in the middle behind the tree another mud room with a door. A woman and three young boys were standing next to the tree, I shouted to them that we intend carrying out a search so please get aside and open the door. They refused and taunted me that being a Pathan you are doing this to us, you have no regard to the traditions of us. In the meantime army opened the door and Captain Suleiman was the first one to enter the courtyard'.

In those micro seconds, a man came out of the room and fired a burst on the military, bullets hit Captain Suleiman, he jerked back, Subedar Sharbat Khan jumped down from the roof and fired back at the man.

'Probably man had a 40 rounds magazine because it seems as if he will keep on firing till eternity, he rushed back into the room, the women and boys in the meantime rushed towards another gate which opened out into the rear of the courtyard; our men outside captured them. We all now moved back from the place of incident back into the same alley. I dragged Captain Suleiman outside, Sepoy Iqbal Turi of Tochi Scouts was also wounded. A grenade was thrown onto us from the adjoining courtyard but luckily it struck the walls and landed into the same courtyard where we were fired upon. We all now move out and put our wounded into the ambulance of Tochi Scouts, which drove back.'

Fog of War regarding which Clausewitz had written almost one hundred and fifty years ago now sets in at this spot. It was at this particular moment when brigade commander and commanding officer heard about this firing and drove towards the place of incident reaching there in twenty minutes. They established their tactical headquarters almost a kilometer short of the compound in an algal which was deep enough to allow them to stand and observe the proceedings. Two tanks were called down from the Amin Post to reinforce the already two armoured cars already present. In another fifteen minutes attack helicopters also came in and hit the compound. One tank was moved to take position in the rear of the compound and other engaged it frontally. 'Mud walls are too tough, even tank rounds and RR failed to create any impact', Recalls Brigadier Aqeel.

Another search operation was immediately planned and groups sent back into the compound, while these groups were moving back to take position around the compound the curfew time expired. 'I was moving with Captain Hammad towards the compound taking cover of the trees when the first burst of fire from miscreants came, we hit the ground and crawled towards our target. We reached almost next to it when I saw a horde of miscreants coming, by this time sniper fire also started pouring in accurately on to us from the village situated across the algal. In another four or five minute few of our soldiers were hit or wounded due to this fire. Tanks also started moving back, now we were engaging the miscreants with small arms fire'.

Brigadier Aqeel now had to take the most important decision of his military career, whether to stand and fight back in fading light or give up the fight for another day. 'we were now being hit inside our tactical headquarters, we were firing back, light was fading and number of injured persons kept on increasing'. At this stage he was persuaded by the others to reach back at Amin Post for the reason that his presence so close to the action may jeopardize the rearguard action. He reluctantly agreed and ordered an organized withdrawal. Under the circumstances it was a very decision because any delay would have taken away the initiative of firepower away from military, one just have to look back at 77 Brigade action in 2007 near MirAli to fully comprehend the gravity of situation.

Force was able to reach the safety of Amin piquet, unfortunately not all of the original composition were lucky enough to come back, quite a number of soldiers laid down their lives to ensure their other comrades can retract safely. That night Amin was hit by the miscreants and it back even harder.

7th May 2012.

By mid all commanders who were on leave rejoined the garrison and miscreants were punished ruthlessly. MiranShah witnessed some of the heaviest firing duel between the military and miscreants. Rockets were flying freely across the short sky line of the city, earth was shaking and walls crumbling. One rocket landed inside the fort close to the office block, hit a tree and then ricochet; hitting one scout Sepoy Sahib Zada Khan Bhittani embraced shahadat in the arms of his wing commander Lieutenant Colonel Tariq Shinwari. Sepoy Irfan Mohmand was also injured but not serious. Tochi Scouts QRF made a dash to the

Fort from Amin Piquet amidst miscreants' indiscriminate fire, one vehicle toppled near the main gate; eleven scouts were injured.

Rest of May days was spent in engaging the miscreants where ever they were observed.

Afghan National Army

In the summer of 2012 the activities of ANA were a matter of concern for the Tochi Scouts. The issue is complicated in a sense that miscreants also fire upon them with rockets while remaining within the boundary of Pakistan. It is similar to attacks launched upon MiranShah which in majority of the cases are fired from 2-3 Kilometers away. On 4th May one mortar bomb of ANA landed within Pakistan territory, on 8th May two such bombs fell into own area, on 9th May at 1655 hours same event happened but this time Tochi Scouts post at Bangidar replied with equal number of rockets. On 10th May 2012 American & ANA forces came close to the Zero Point, initially one Chinook and one gunship landed at 1105 hours followed by eight APCs which all halted forty yards within Afghanistan territory. Tochi Scouts patrol on inquiry learnt that they were looking for a proper site for checking of vehicles. It was at this time it was learnt that they had given prior information of their intended reconnaissance to Islamabad but it took time before it reached down to the men on spots. With volatile situation boiling up due to Salala Post incident there were all the chances of the post opening up fire had they ventured even a meter inside own territory.

In June fire exchange between the Tochi Scouts and ANA increased substantially, on 5th June they fired nine mortar bombs and in return five were fired by Tochi Scouts Bangidar Fort Post. Heavy fire duel took place on 6th June which lasted almost whole day, first one at 1015 hours, second at 1125 hours. Third fire exchange of the day took place at 1320 hours when Bangidar, Behram and Zero point Posts of Tochi Scouts fired five mortar bombs on ANA. One mortar bomb of ANA landed inside Bangidar Fort near exchange without causing any damage. Tarkhobi an ANA post is the main culprit.

Rest of the summer was spent in the same manner, there were days when the miscreants activities would increase and then suddenly dying down surfacing again. Rockets attacks were launched against MiranShah after the 6th May incident. On 23rd June Fort received three rockets at 2012 hours, one landed near Sargardan Post, other at ROD ground but the third one landed inside the Officers Mess, missing the main structure by mere meters and hitting a mud roof room, there were two waiters inside both remained scrathless. Taking this particular rocket as case study, it is worth mentioning that no less than five senior officers were sitting in the mess lawn at that particular moment when this rocket landed mere ten meters away. These officers remained composed finished their tea and then calmly left the mess as if nothing has happened. The reaction of officers is vital in maintaining the over stance of the corps. As a precaution commandant put a ban on the scouts sleeping outside their barracks at night.

Similar rocket attack was launched on the Amin by the miscreants on 5th August 2012 by post reacted heavily by firing 490 rounds of G-3, 45 rounds of 12.7mm gun, three bombs of mortar and three rounds of 106mm RR, reportedly five miscreants were killed.

Christian community also had a taste of war when a unguided rocket landed close to the Tochi Scouts church on 10th August. Same night another rocket landed close to the Datta Khel Post.

Life in MiranShah

From the preceding events a different kind of life pattern emerges about MiranShah and words cannot do justice to the pulsating, exciting, thrilling, fulfilling and above all relaxing environments of this wonderful fort and garrison. No doubt it is the most dangerous place on this earth right now. Nothing can be taken as granted here, one moment it all peace and very next moment a loud bang of a rocket landing close by. Here the morning wakeup call on majority of days is a loud burst of machine gun. Most of the nights it is the artillery fire which is soothing to the ears. After a week any new comer can very conveniently and confidently can differentiate between the firing sounds of a G-3, Kalashnikov, Mortar, medium and field artillery pieces. Scouts walk here with their chest high; there is something in their walk and their conduct, their whole body radiating an aura of self confidence. These are the men who daily face danger, who stood all night guarding the fort, who on any given day move out of fort knowing fully well that roads and tracks are full of IEDs, they take every day as a last day, this is what this seven years of war has instilled in them.

It is blessing in disguise for the newly inducted recruits to understand the life pattern in which they are going to spend quarter of a century. Old hands are here to guide them through. For young army officers it is a dream come true, it simply brings the best out of them which probably even they were not fully aware of themselves in peace stations. RODs, piqueting and staying at posts is the kind of experience which many a generations have passed away without ever hearing so much of fire power; except on firing range which this generation is experiencing every day. This life is different from Siachen Glacier where nature was the biggest enemy, here man is the worst predator and one wrong move on part of any officer in Frontier Warfare; it can make or break a life time reputation.

Tochi scouts life has been affected by this war, they can no longer visit bazaar or sit idly, but it has been replaced with a better more positive life pattern. Living accommodation has been upgraded, lawns are sprawling, fresh seasonal flowers to refresh the tired and worried mind, above all sports. There were regular sports fixtures in the evenings, volleyball, football, cricket for the scouts and tennis for the officers. Nowhere else in the world Tennis is played in such dangerous environments as it is done here. A set is often interrupted with a sound of machine gun and rocket firing, attack helicopters flying above, coming or going for a sortie. There is a telephone set with operator sitting passing and collecting all the messages. Tennis is a kind of mental therapy for all the officers, divisional staff also plays here and it helps in cutting down the lengthy chain of command to discuss fresh ideas. Cup of tea after the games is the most relaxing drink in the world, with sun setting down on the Durand Line, an odd jet liner flying above leaving contra trails {MiranShah is an international airways

check point} and the unmistakable humming noise of drones flying above. The best part of fort life is the Retreat Bugle, everyone in the open stands attention while the flag is lowered and gates are being closed.

Scouts in the summer evening prefers long walks going around different posts, enjoying the fresh air, greenery and beautiful countryside. The orchards were full of ripe plum, apricot and pomegranate. Despite the instructions not to pluck them still like young naughty boys these scouts indulge in this irresistible play. Posts always present a calm posture no matter how serious or grave the situation is but still faces of scouts radiate confidence. To a scout most precious thing seems to be his pet, usually a Chikor, he looks after him like his own child, covering him during the hot part of day with shade, washing him, feeding him and feels good talking about him. Just like traditional British society the best way to start conversation with a scout is by asking about his pet.

Ramadan in 2012 came in the early days of July, it changes life pattern, there is no question that anyone can find anything to eat in this month inside the Fort. Sehri is an elaborate affair, no working after ten o clock and then iftaari. Scouts traditionally prefers to have collective iftaari in the lawns outside their living barracks. Additional ration was supplemented by the commandant, on Eid he visits as many post as possible in two days. There is a rush for availing Eid leave and that is the delicate part.

Cricket was in full swing during the summer, Pakistan was visiting Sri Lanka and all scouts followed it intensively. The dress in summer consists of a T-shirt and trouser with shoes if wearing combat dress otherwise standard kameez shalwar. A page from the diary of a retired officer who happened to visit MiranShah on 7th May 2012 is reproduced here {with minor editing}

In the afternoon I had a walk in the mess and found a library although it is not that rich in terms of books yet it is in these far flung remote areas especially among Scouts libraries that one comes across some rich manuscripts and same was the case here. I also went to Museum and one has to appreciate the spirit because it is one of the best kept museum in Pakistan especially when one keeps in mind the environment, needless to say the female mannequins wearing local dress depicting the cultural heritage of the area are the only female sex symbols in the area and I have to admit that it does create sensations. The long walk on the main mall is mind refreshing the variety of roses planted here and all in their bloom is a treat for the eyes and soul and the traditional warning boards planted in the furrows warning the soldiers not to step on these rose buds have typical Scouts sense of humour embalmed in it.

Dinner in the mess all alone, the dining hall is square and big but not huge with corps and national flags on front wall, a piano in working condition two glass cupboards with mess silver and half a dozen heads of Urial and deer mounted on the dinning hall walls along with equal number of antique and not so antique weapons mainly machine guns forms part of dinning hall décor. Mess has innumerable rooms or at least it seems like this all having varying décor but weapons and silver remains the central theme. It is after a long time that one comes across a mess so rich in military décor. A scrap book presented in 1937 by two

Scouts officers have wealth of old pictures my eyes caught the picture of an Auster aircraft at MiranShah strip in 1946 there is a letter of the pilot as well who visited the place in 1988 for nostalgic reasons.

2130 hours. Outside the thunder of clouds and that of explosives are intermingling, all day there has been constant firing between the Taliban's and the Tochi Scouts. The fort is strong and almost a whole wing is entrusted with its inner cordon protection. A rocket exploded within the fort area while I was having a cup of tea with the quartermaster in his office but it seems routine affair, soon he told me after listening to the telephone call that sepoy Sahibzad Bhotani has died in this explosion. I was just wondering whether I should walk back to the mess amidst this fire or just keep on sitting in this office. Thought of Lawrence of Arabia and was convinced that he must have got the same reception in 1927.

Another whistling sound of a rocket and a counter fire from the scouts but life within the mess is as normal as one can imagine. When I came from the strip on a jeep in this fort I heard the noise of gun fire and thought that scouts are carrying out range practice but my driver corrected me by stating it is actual fire. I have no hesitation in admitting that in my whole twenty three years of military service I have not seen so much hostile fire which I encountered today and it is still going on.

...I met the Corps Subedar Major Zulfiqar at his office a good natured person with a typical scout sense of humour which becomes obvious after few minutes of observation. He showed me a bullet cartridge which was collected from the post in yesterday firing, it was fired from the Cobra and SM was furious over this he also resented the fact that yesterday not a single rocket was fired by the Cobras. He updated me on the yesterday's episode ' sahib we also have wife and children and if these bastards are going to show no respect for them why should we do so... I ordered the troops yesterday to fire on the mosque as well, Taliban's were using it as a strong point'. I talked about the footwear of Scouts after having a look at his brown chappal; he very proudly told me that this chappal is made in his native hometown of Parachinar.

.... I saw MiranShah from the wedge of the post a scene typical of frontier almost a dozen trucks were standing parked and there was no movement at all, along the road are few double storied houses which also act as kind of hotels and my guide told me that fire normally comes from these high buildings although few have been demolished. The fear of unknown that the bullet may come from any direction at any time is quite sensational. Scouts have raised the banks of the road so as to create a kind of obstruction for the snipers. I also had a look at the observation post and the wall graffiti, there was no mention of sweet hearts as is common in Siachen posts neither any poetry of romance rather few advisory and morality related issues were chalked; like stealing is bad.

Winter of 2012

By winter 2012 the situation was under control of military, 6th May incident was thoroughly analysed and deductions were reached and acted upon. Major General Ali Abbas

highlights the fact *'to eliminate these miscreants through use of force is not a difficult task especially with the available manpower and firepower but the dilemma is how to avoid collateral damage which is bound to happen in this scenario. Thus army and for that matter military's aim is to compel the locals to evict foreign fighting elements present among them'*. Ali further highlights that one of the key step he took was to make the division identify target during hours of darkness, aim was to avoid collateral damage. In this *'I was lucky to have good engineers present in my formation, we purchased laser pointers from open market, some from abroad and then convert them into night vision sights, it has helped a lot'*.

Despite all these efforts to avoid collateral damage there are still instances which compel military to take stern action. Friday 19th October 2012 promised to be a peaceful day but early in the morning at 0900 an attack took place at Stadium Check Post.

19th October 2012

Stadium check Post over the years has been fortified and technology has been integrated into the overall defence lay out of the fort and garrison. There is a walk way gate checking where all the males entering into the fort perimeter are searched. There are school children who come daily for education, there are civilians who are residing in political agent's colony, there are people who have official work at the political agent's office or at tehsil, there is a bank inside the perimeter. Thus scouts have to be extra alert and vigilant in dealing with such a variety of people. A lady searcher has been hired by the Tochi Scouts to have a look at the females.

All the time there is a guard of five scouts present at all corners of the stadium, over all a platoon is deployed under the command of a JCO. Surveillance cameras are also installed at key points which are inter connected with the garrison control room.

While the checking of people was in progress and it is rather thin at this time of the day. Lance Naik Ikram Ullah Marwat was checking the vehicles and Sepoy Irfan Ullah Bhattani was detailed at walk through gate. Guard Commander Naik Akhtar Jamil Khattak was also standing at the gate while another sentry Sepoy Rizwan Ullah Khattak was manning the machine gun bunker.

Two miscreants were walking across the road behind a truck and taking cover behind it they cross the road towards the check post and rushed , at that precise moment guard commander also spotted them, Sepoy Irfan Ullah Bhattani who was standing at the walk through gate also looked up and instinctively raised his sub machine gun from the same spot. Miscreant's fire and Bhattani's fire almost had mid air collision, Bhattani's bullets hit him in the chest and he fell down but in the process his hand grenade which he had already thrown towards the post landed close to it. Second miscreant was also hit in legs. Naik Akhtar Jamil sustained bullet injuries and embraced shahadat. **Miscreants were carrying one SMG, eight magazines, seven grenades.**

Commandant Tochi Scouts was the first one to reach at spot because he was already going towards the office when he heard the firing and immediately diverted towards the post . The second miscreant despite being injured was firing on the post from across the road, he

had other accomplices also with him. For next five minutes commandant held the post before he was joined in by the Lieutenant Colonel Rab Nawaz the wing commander, Captain Bilal the adjutant and Captain Saad.

Miscreants was later identified as a Uzbek, the whole attack had a purpose and back ground. Miscreants intention and plan was to over run the Tochi Post with a suicide attack followed by a vehicle borne attack team which was to head towards the Tehsil Jail. However timely reaction by the post and commandant saved the day. It simply highlights how important an individual is in blunting any attack or in other words it is the sentry at post who can put an end to 'Domino Theory' . Just imagine had these miscreants been successful in infiltrating or penetrating the Tochi Scouts inner defence the notion of victory would have been snatched from Tochi Scouts for years to come. It is a great tribute to all the scouts and their officers at MiranShah that despite the fact that military installations have been hit and penetrated all over Pakistan, these miscreants have not been able to have the same effects here at MiranShah.

Evening 19th October 2012

This attack had a back ground, there are foreign fighting elements present in the city. 7 Division had conducted one operation along with Tochi Scouts against them in January 2010. Machis a small village on the eastern end of Fort is their hub. On the evening of 19th October 2012, army hit back with all its might on these foreign fighting elements. For last almost two months there were negotiations going on with the Peace Committee regarding the future of these foreign miscreant. Peace Committee was trying hard but without any success, however the local population pressure was now mounting on these miscreants as all the misery coming on to the city is due to them. Military's policy of holding back the fury for last so many years was now bearing the results. Miscreants on 19th October had this strategic goal of humiliating the military in its own backyard there by establishing themselves as the war lords of the area; but it was foiled by the Tochi Scouts.

Now army had a legitimate excuse to punish these anti state elements and it did so. The evening of 19th October will remain engraved in the memory of all those present at the spot. Every weapon fired tanks, recoilless rifles, field and medium artillery, mortars and attack helicopters pounded the miscreants' locations with precision.

Captain Bilal adjutant of Tochi Scouts is a ghazi officer; he joined Tochi Scouts in August 2012, and soon found himself at Machis Post. Bilal in classical scout style spent hours just observing the village down below, noting down every movement taking place and soon realised that there is a pattern which exists in this village. He was able to identify the houses of miscreants something which own intelligence agencies were not able to do so with such precision in all these years. There were three different groups living in the village, Taliban, Uzbek and Mahsud apart from Punjabi Taliban. Bilal was able to identify all of them, he also spotted the house of an IED maker

' it is a small house with four rooms all along the wall, there are kids and goats inside, he has two further pillared rooms like mechanical transport shed, an aerial is present

for communication apart from a gas cylinder, this house is located in the centre of village and the road from Machis factory leads to this house. A red land cruiser visited this house at around 1835 hours and all militants welcomed it. This house has a tower at its rear and a mosque with big verandah. Another coaster of white colour reached the house at 1845 hours, main house is used only for work and nothing else'.

Captain Bilal also identified Talib's house ' the house is the last one on the corner and has 70 by 70 meters area of plain ground, the house is a complex with five rooms, number of green local trees inside on the north eastern side, a tower shaped feature on the eastern direction, house has two doors both on the same wall facing south, one door is painted blue and other is in rusted colour, blue gate opens into a baithak where as the rusted gate opens into the hallway'. { this house was hit with a drone attack in 2008}.

Regarding Uzbek's house Bilal noted that 'it has a clump of four or five tall trees which provides excellent cover and one door {light blue} opens towards Machis Village' . Mahsud's house was located on the bank of alga, 'one of the strongest complexes observed in the area...seven interconnected houses in one single line...all having foxholes' . Captain Bilal's observation regarding the miscreants is interesting as he observed them the way a hunter concentrate on his prey. ' The Taliban are of all ages, mostly men having long beards and hair wearing turbans and boys of 16-18 years and another group of 14 years. In Mahsud complex the regular guests were coming in blue Binjo car and they used to meet each other in cultivated area usually for half an hour, there is a population of Turks and Tajiks in Mahsud's complex as well, they have six horses as well which normally grazes in alga, they patrol the area on these horses. Uzbek had two daughters of around four years of age and plays outside the house, '

Machis Village was identified as the hub of nefarious activities and as such was punished on the evening of 19th October 2012. At 1600 hours artillery opened up with observers at Amin, Machis and Sarbankai directing the fire. Captain Bilal went up with the crew of Bell 412 to guide the Cobras on the houses of miscreants, all care was taken to avoid collateral damage and this is where Bilal's observation came handy. Cobras hit the exact houses, fired 20mm Gatling rounds hitting the vehicles parked inside the complexes. On ground tanks & recoilless rifles at Sargardan and Datta Khel Posts carried out direct hits on the houses suspected of facilitating miscreants in their fire attacks on the fort. There is no scene better than Cobras diving and attacking the miscreants hide outs, the sound of their guns following them after they have taken right turn out of the target area. Commandant Tochi Scout guided the Cobras while sitting at the top of water tank reservoir, Brigadier Shahid commander divisional artillery along with Colonel Akhtar was at Iftikhar Post, Brigadier Raza and Colonel Staff Colonel Riaz at the Sargardan Post. This heavy fire power continued for an hour. It was sad because at identical time all the mosques within the Fort and in the city called the faithful for Maghreb prayers. Military paused the fire power for the duration of prayers;; all night artillery roared . In the morning there were reportedly over thirty miscreants killed.

Another skirmish connected with the same thread took place on 22nd October when miscreants in retaliation attacked Tochi Scouts at Amin, fire raid started at 1915 hours

from multiple direction, in reply almost all posts of Tochi Scouts that included Amin, Banda, Machis, Sarbankai, Kalanjar fired back with no hold barred.

In November 2012 miscreants resorted back to IEDs, on 4th November Amin Post detected one, again on 11th November Amin detected one more. On 22nd Captain Saad detected one IED at Kalanjar.

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ⁱⁱⁱGrahamWalts,. *The Learning of History* . {London : Routledge & Kegan,1972},p-41.

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^v Lester Stephen . *Probing the past a guide to the study of and teaching history*.{Boston: Allyn & Bacon. 1974},p.5.

^{vi} Arnold Jhonson,. *The Historian and historical Evidence*{NewYork: Charles Scribner 1926},p.33.

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^{viii} <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/TURNER/> American Frontier , a thesis written by Ted Turner in 1890.

^{ix} <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~HYPER/TURNER/> American Frontier , a thesis written by Ted Turner in 1890.

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^{xi} Ibid,p-87.

^{xii} Ranke, Leopold. ‘The Historians Task’ in *The Secrets of World History selected writings on the art and science of History*, ed and trans, Roger Wines. {New York: Fordham University Press,1981},p

^{xiii} Kojin Karatini. *History and Repetition* ,ed. Seiji M.Lippit {NewYork: Columbia University,2012}.

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^{xv} Karl Jaspers, *The Origins and Goal of History* ,{NewHaven: Yale University,1953},I.

^{xvi}William Edward Harpole Lecky, *Historical and Political Essays* {NewYork:Freeport,1970{1908},pp,1-9.

^{xvii} Alan Munslow, *A History of History* ,{London:Routledge,2012},pp.37-44.

^{xviii}Lynn Hunt, *Writing History in Global Era* {NewYork: Norton,2014},p.2.

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